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ABSTRACT

Twelve chapter-length case studies of schools that participated in the Research and Development Utilization (RDU) program are presented to illuminate change management issues. The report is intended for use either as a text or as a book of readings for school professionals. Each chapter is accompanied by questions that are suitable for group discussion of the case. The case studies are organized into three parts, each focusing on a different set of themes or issues in school improvement. The case studies in part two emphasize issues related to leadership and participation, including the roles of school administrators, teachers, and community members, as well as the relationship between teacher participation in the change process and feelings of staff ownership of the change decisions. The case studies in part three emphasize strategies and tactics. These include critical decisions and methods for dealing with or taking advantage of the local context. Finally, the case studies in part four emphasize readiness and contingencies through a discussion of critical events and characteristics of the school and its staff that affect the readiness of the school to accomplish a change program. The final chapter synthesizes all 12 cases. (Author/MLF)

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Linking R&D with Schools

Perspectives on School Improvement: A Casebook for Curriculum Change

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PREFACE

In 1976 the National Institute of Education embarked upon an ambitious three year demonstration that was intended to field test new models of how best to provide schools with high quality information and technical assistance to help them solve locally identified problems. This effort, called the R&D Utilization (RDU) program also included a significant research component, which operated both within seven funded service delivery projects, and through a three and a half year study, one part of which is reported in this volume. The study of the RDU program was not intended as a traditional evaluation of the degree to which demonstration objectives were met or which of the seven projects achieved them. Rather, the study had a more general mandate to use the experiences of the RDU projects and the schools that became their clients to illuminate some enduring problems, voiced by researchers, policy makers, program managers, and practitioners, about problems of creating and sustaining effective change programs in schools.

This general mandate has led to a wide variety of different reports, each of which addresses the general question of how to produce effective knowledge use and school improvement in schools from a different perspective, or for a different audience. (An annotated bibliography of reports may be found in Louis and Rosenblum, 1981.) This volume is intended to address the needs of both practitioners and program managers to have materials available from the RDU schools that will shed some light upon the dilemmas of managing and directing a change process at the school level.

Over the past 20 years, as schools and school districts have dealt with increasing internal and external pressures for change, a considerable body of literature has developed which focuses on curriculum innovation. Most of the literature falls into two main types. The first consists of research studies which illuminate the problems and outcomes of change, but are written in technical language and are intended primarily to communicate to other researchers. A second type consists of prescriptive manuals for change managers, usually consisting of "how-to" generalizations based upon the implications of varius change theories or studies. Publications that present real case materials, but which can engage the practitioner as an interpreter of data, are largely missing in the existing literature. The purpose of this volume is to fill this gap, and in the process, to broaden the way that school personnel--and even researchers--think about the change process and how it can be managed.

The real impetus for the volume came not, however, from the need but from the fortuitous availability of case materials to fill it. Without the significant efforts of the contributing case study authors, this effort would not exist. The cases that are represented here are a selection of those that were prepared as part of research activities funded by the seven RDU projects and which were made available for our use. Inspired by the wealth of material, we selected cases that combined detailed observations about the management issues that we had chosen to emphasize, and which were completed late enough in the RDU program so that we could make some judgments about cause-and-effect relationships, or the dynamics of change at the local level. The initial case manuscripts, which typically consisted of 50 or more pages, were then thoughtfully edited by Peter Desmond to highlight particular issues in change management.

Others have contributed in significant ways to producing the final manuscripts. Insightful review of earlier drafts were made by Robert Dentler, Robert Herriott, and Jack Culbertson, each of whom has encouraged us to improve the work in various ways. Additional support and reviews were provided by colleagues in NIE, particularly John Egermeier, Michael Kane, and Naida Bagenstos. Terry Deal deserves particular credit for having stimulated us to thinking of producing a case book, and for helping to develop some of the basic structure for the volume. Finally, Thea Moskat, Mary Ellen Perry and Kathe Phinney helped us to manage the difficult task of producing many drafts, often under severe deadlines. To all of the above we give our thanks, and absolve them of any responsibility for deficiencies in our efforts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

PREFACE.. i

PART 1 INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1: THE MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE....... 3
CHAPTER 2: PERSPECTIVES ON THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS.............................. 19

PART 2 LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

CHAPTER 3: BELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.................... 47
CHAPTER 4: PARKER VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT... 61
CHAPTER 5: BAYFIELD SCHOOL........................... 73
CHAPTER 6: SUGARVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.............. 83

PART 3 STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

CHAPTER 7: GREENFIELD JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL............. 95
CHAPTER 8: PENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT.....................107
CHAPTER 9: SASQUATCH SCHOOL DISTRICT.................115
CHAPTER 10: TREELINE SCHOOL DISTRICT..................123

PART 4 READINESS AND CONTINGENCIES

CHAPTER 11: JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL..............135
CHAPTER 12: OGDEN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL..................149
CHAPTER 13: GALAXY HIGH SCHOOL.......................159
CHAPTER 14: CRAMER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL................171

PART 5 SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER 15: ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS............................183

REFERENCES..203

APPENDIX: RDU PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS.............................209

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

THE MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Over the past 20 years, much has been written about curriculum innovation and the management of planned change in schools. Most of the literature falls into two main types. The first type consists of research studies which illuminate the problems and outcomes of change but are frequently written in a jargon-laded technical style that is not easily read by teachers and administrators. A second type consists of how-to-do-it manuals; these give generalized prescriptions for the management of school change based on the implications of social science research. Unfortunately, these manuals can be very misleading, since they frequently ignore the fact that one's own situation might be the exception to the general rule.

To date, there have been few publications that engage the practicing administrator (or student of educational administration) in active interpretation of data, drawing upon the administrator's own knowledge and experience, in addition to various research perspectives, to analyze actual cases of school change. Though the case method of instruction has been used extensively in other fields--such as medicine, business administration, and social work, there are few collections of case materials in educational administration. This book is intended to help fill that gap.

The purpose of this volume is to help educational administrators become more adept analysts of school change processes so that they may develop more effective management strategies tailored to varying situations. Drawing on theoretical discussions of the change process as well as textbooks on the management of change, we present a set of perspectives for analyzing school improvement efforts and point out that each perspective has its strengths and weaknesses. We also present actual cases of school improvement efforts to engage the readers of this book in active interpretation of situations they might encounter themselves as administrators. We then discuss the implications of these cases for resolving managerial dilemmas that arise in the process of school improvement.

We hope that this volume will broaden the ways that administrators think about the change process and how it can be effectively managed. We do not prescribe specific management strategies, nor do we suggest that one analytic perspective or set of perspectives is better than another. Rather, since the change process is complex, and there are no single factors that control the outcomes of change efforts, we believe the process must be viewed from a variety of perspectives in order to design strategies that are appropriate in a given context. This book synthesizes a number of perspectives that have been taken in the analysis of school change efforts, then allows the reader to form his or her own conclusions on the usefulness of these perspectives through the analysis of selected case studies.

The need for a book to help educational administrators sharpen their analytic tools has never been greater than in this half of the twentieth century. Today's schools are under great pressure to change, to innovate, and to improve, while at the same time most school systems are faced with declining enrollments, increased fiscal stringency, and a host of related management problems. Educational administration has always been a balancing act, requiring the administrator to provide both ongoing instructional leadership and operational management of the schools. The dual role is difficult in the best of times, but today's administrator faces increased pressures in both areas of responsibility.

THE PRESSURE FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The push for school change comes from all sides--from parents, from taxpayers, from the media, from state and federal legislators and administrators--and also from within--from teachers and other concerned professionals. Parents are concerned because they want their children to acquire the skills and the preparation that they need to compete and to survive in today's society. They know that education is increasingly a factor in employment; they also understand that basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills are needed in all aspects of life and that the need for these skills in an increasingly complex and technological society is even greater than it was some years ago. Yet they read in the newspapers and magazines that reading and math scores are declining, and they worry about their own children's futures. Taxpayers are concerned, too. They want to know that the money being spent on schools is worthwhile; it angers them to hear that in some places it is possible to pass through high school and still be functionally illiterate. In response to these concerns, some state legislatures and school boards have established testing programs to increase school accountability for pupil achievement levels; others have mandated local planning to increase the effectiveness of basic skills instruction.

For example, the Basic Skills Improvement Policy adopted by the State Board of Education in Massachusetts requires each school district, beginning in 1980, to test students in reading, writing, and math skills and to set local standards for passing or failing the tests. The Education Accountability Act passed by the Florida legislature in 1976 links a mandated testing program with statewide standards for pupil progression and graduation from high school. As reported in Time magazine, student competency examinations have become a requirement in roughly four out of five states. In a parallel movement, various forms of competency testing for teachers or for teacher applicants have been approved in twelve states, with nine other states also considering such proposals ("Help! Teacher Can't Teach," Time, June 16, 1980).

The federal role in stimulating educational innovation and change has also increased substantially over the past 20 years. Many of the federal efforts have been designed to enhance educational opportunities for children who have been discriminated against on cultural, racial, or economic grounds. Thus, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, together with amendments in 1974 and 1978, authorized federal assistance for such programs as compensatory education for the disadvantaged (Title I), bilingual education (Title VII), and education for the children of migrant farm workers. The Emergency School Aid Act, first passed in 1972, provided for federal assistance to local education agencies who had or would adopt a plan to eliminate, reduce, or prevent the isolation of minority group students in their schools. In many districts the desegregation plans have involved changes in educational programming--for example, through the development of "magnet schools" which offer a special curriculum to attract students of different racial backgrounds. The Higher Education Act of 1965 established the Teacher Corps program to improve the education provided in low-income communities. In addition to funding colleges and universities to develop innovative approaches to teacher training, the program aids local school systems in developing or introducing new curricula, teaching methods, and staffing patterns. Handicapped children are another minority group that has been aided by recent federal legislation. Federal legislation culminating in P.L. 94-142 requires that states establish procedures for providing an appropriate education to all handicapped children and that these procedures safeguard the children's rights to an "individualized educational plan" and "placement in the least restrictive environment."

Other federal efforts have been more broadly concerned with improving the general quality of education in the United States in order not to fall behind in international economic, technologic, and political competition. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title IV, Part C, authorizes formula grants to states to be distributed on a competitive basis to local education agencies for the support of supplementary educational services and innovative projects. The Education Amendments of 1974 and 1978 created or reauthorized programs in metric education, education for gifted and talented children, arts in education, and basic skills improvement. The last named program was intended to provide assistance to state and local education agencies and other organizations for activities designed to demonstrate improved delivery of instructional services in the areas of reading, writing, and math. Other federal legislation has authorized support for advancements in vocational education and career education.

Thus, over the past two decades, a large amount of federal funding has been devoted to supporting improvements in educational curricula, methods, and materials. For some years, however, it has appeared as though these improvements were not spreading effectively to schools across the country. Therefore, the more recent federal efforts have included a variety of mechanisms to stimulate the use of innovations in education. Examples of these mechanisms are programs such as the National Diffusion Network, the State Capacity Building Program, and the Research and Development Utilization Program.

It would be a mistake, though, to assume that all the pressure for school improvement has come from outside the schools. The push for change has also come from teachers and other concerned professionals. This is especially true in schools or school districts that have undergone radical shifts in the composition of their student populations to include students with vastly different backgrounds, expectations, or achievement levels. This may occur through the changing character of a neighborhood--for example, a rural district may become suburbanized, a housing project may be built in an area of single-family homes, or one ethnic group may gradually replace another. It can also occur through desegregation plans that call for busing or rezoning. Whatever the cause, teachers in many schools have found that their old teaching practices are inappropriate. The challenge in some areas is to meet the higher expectations of more sophisticated or affluent parents and in others to reach children whose home environments are not supportive of education, or whose previous preparation has been inadequate.

Yet, as mentioned above, these pressures for change and improvement come at a time of great uncertainty and crisis for many school districts. Shrinking school enrollments have been a problem for three out of four school districts during the past ten years (Leppert and Routh, 1978) and have meant a decline in state-level funding based on the size of local student populations. Furthermore, decreasing public faith in the ability of school systems to improve, together with generally poor economic conditions, has led to more frequent failures of local school bond issues and tax levies (Herriott and Gross, 1979). The result of dwindling resources has been teacher layoffs, program cuts, and cuts in support services--all of which have a profound effect on local school climate, not to mention enthusiasm for innovation. There is greater tension than ever in bargaining over teacher contracts, and teachers are exerting more pressure to control working conditions, such as inservice hours, the length of the work day, and so on.

Thus, the educational administrator faces increased pressures in both arenas of his or her work role: instructional leadership and school management. The challenge for the administrator is to muster the resources and the local enthusiasm to accomplish needed school change programs, against a backdrop of general fiscal decline and professional discouragement.

THE ROLES OF ADMINISTRATORS IN MANAGING SCHOOL CHANGE

The importance of the administrator's role in stimulating or fostering school improvement has been established through numerous research studies (see, for example, Berman and McLaughlin, 1978; Rosenblum and Louis, 1981; Sarason, 1971; Berman, 1972; Emrick et al., 1977) as well as in the minds of most practitioners. Talk to any teacher involved in some school change effort, and you will hear a remark about how the principal or a district administrator has promoted or blocked the change effort through his or her actions (or lack of action).

What roles can an administrator adopt in relation to an innovation? In some instances the administrator may initiate changes according to his or her own perception of the need--or stimulate innovation by providing the opportunity for appropriate constituencies to develop recommendations. At other times the administrator may simply respond to suggestions that are developed independently of his or her own actions. Sometimes the administrator may be required to implement changes decided upon by a higher level of administration. The administrator may serve as a conduit to connect those requesting the change with the appropriate parties for accomplishing change; the administrator may also create the context in which change can be negotiated among the parties concerned. The administrator may choose to support those advocating the change and join them in attempting to bring the change about; conversely, the administrator may persuade those proposing changes not to push for the changes they have proposed, to push for something else, or to change the timing of their efforts. The administrator may also act as an ombudsman, voicing the concerns of any group whose point of view might not otherwise be given adequate consideration. Finally, the administrator may choose to be a non-actor and make only minimal response to the change proposal (Small, 1974).

The role of the administrator as the gatekeeper of change--i.e., the individual most important for the successful introduction of change into

11

schools--has been stressed by a number of writers. For the most part, however, these writers have dealt with just the tip of the iceberg. Herriott and Gross (1979) point out that many discourses on the management of educational change assume that "the success or failure of planned organizational change efforts is basically a function of the ability of management to overcome staff resistance to change that exists just prior to, or at the time of, the introduction of the innovation." They contrast this model to the idea of a "leadership obstacle course," in which overcoming or neutralizing staff resistance to change is just one of the prerequisite steps:

> What is required are administrators who can give leadership to the following tasks: identifying basic problems of their schools, determining their contributing factors, selecting or developing innovations that are "on target," designing and implementing efficient and effective change strategies, incorporating the innovations into their organization, and assessing their effects. Once the decision to introduce an innovation is made, the tailor-made strategy these officials develop to implement it needs to reflect a hard-headed assessment of the matrix of forces in and outside of their schools that could block the innovation at different stages of the change process. It also needs to specify courses of action to overcome obstacles if they arise. (pp. 41-42)

This suggests that there is a series of decisions to be made at different stages of the change process, and that administrative leadership is critical to ensure an appropriate response at each decision point. Moreover, the administrator must retain sufficient flexibility to shift tactics as warranted by the flow of events.

In greater (though not exhaustive) detail, administrators must ask themselves the following questions as the change process unfolds:

1. Is the time ripe for change in our school(s)? If the potential for external project help is available, do the advantages of project participation outweigh the disadvantages?

2. Have we defined an appropriate problem, or task, for this point in time? Do we have concrete evidence that there is a problem to be addressed, and have we analyzed the causes of the problem? Do we have a clear idea of our specific needs? Are we setting our sights too high or too low?

3. What type of innovation will be most appropriate to solve this problem? Shall we give the teachers new materials, or shall we try to change their teaching practices or the structure of the school? Shall we make big changes, or little changes? Shall we develop our own solutions, or shall we import them from outside? Shall we focus only on solutions

that have been tested and proven to be effective, or shall we give equal weight to professional opinions, including our own? Shall we adopt something that that can stand alone or something that could be integrated into our existing programs?

4. Have we searched hard enough and far enough for an innovation? Have we chosen wisely, given what we wanted and what was available?

5. Shall we implement the innovation exactly as it was designed, or shall we modify the innovation to fit our local circumstances? If we choose to modify the innovation, is our version close enough to the original to ensure that we get similar results?

6. Whom shall we select to implement the innovation? If the innovation is intended for broad use across teachers, shall we begin with a pilot group or shall we involve all potential implementers at the begining? How shall we introduce the innovation to the teachers, and what kind of training should be provided?

7. How closely shall we monitor and control the teachers' use of the innovation? Have we recognized and dealt with any problems that may hamper implementation? Have we paid adequate attention to gathering information that would indicate whether the innovation is having its intended effect?

8. Should the innovation be continued? If so, do we have, or could we obtain, the necessary resources for continuation?

Management of the change process is not just a question of impersonal strategy design, however. To a very large extent, it is a people-managing process. Thus, the administrator must also find answers to the following questions:

1. Who (i.e., other administrators, faculty, community members) should be involved at each stage of the change process, how, and in what roles?

2. How should decisions be made: by an individual, a committee, or all the affected staff? How will group decisions be reached: by consensus, a plurality, or a majority? How can debilitating conflicts be resolved?

3. What role should a person play as an administrator? Should one stay involved as an an active leader throughout the process, or should one delegate the day-to-day leadership responsibility? If leadership is delegated, how can one continue to show support and enthusiasm for the change effort?

4. Should outside "experts" be called in to help guide the change process or to help in analyzing problems and seeking solutions?

The answers to all these questions must be considered in the light of the local environment. For example, the characteristics that could affect these decisions are:

1. The availability of resources, including funding, professional expertise, and time for planning;

2. The leadership capabilities of local adminstrators or other potential managers of the change program;

3. The extent of local experience in planned organizational change;

4. The extent of prior efforts related to the same problem area, and the extent to which a new effort would be regarded as an extension of these efforts or needless duplication;

5. The general school climate, including teacher morale, collegiality among staff, and relations between teachers and students or teachers and administrators; and

6. The general sense of the severity of the problem and the urgency of a solution, as well as the conviction of various individuals that they themselves can make things different.

In addition, events that are not that uncommon, such as administrative turnover, teacher strikes, and so on, may cause a temporary hitch in the change effort and a need to adjust to new circumstances.

Deciding what role to adopt with respect to a given innovation, as well as designing an overall change strategy, thus requires an incisive analysis of not only the educational consequences of an innovation, but also the political and social environment for change. Becoming a more adept analyst of the change process will enhance the administrator's influence and effectiveness as a manager of school improvement.

MANAGERIAL ISSUES AND DILEMMAS

To simplify, the many areas of concern described in the preceding section can be grouped into three major categories of issues that face all managers of school change programs. First, there are those issues concerned with leadership of, and participation in, the change effort. Included here are questions concerning administrative involvement and control, faculty involvement and control, and relationships with the community. The second category is concerned with strategies and tactics--in other words, what kinds of innovation are attempted, and how they are chosen, introduced, implemented, and evaluated. The third and last category includes issues related to readiness and contingencies--that is, whether the school or district has the necessary resources and staff motivation to accomplish the change program, and how any recent or potential critical events (such as a teachers' strike, or staff turnover) may affect the change program.

Within each abstract category are certain key dilemmas, or conflictful concrete issues, that must be resolved in any change effort. Some of these dilemmas are choices that must be made between two mutually exclusive actions; others can be regarded as continuous dimensions, and the choice that must be made is whether to lean toward one extreme or the other. This is not to say that in every change effort a conscious decision is made to resolve each dilemma, though this is often the case. Rather, the change manager's numerous actions inevitably place him or her on one side or the other of each issue, even when the manager seems unaware of an alternative. Indeed, the manager's perspective, or way of viewing the process of school change, may act as a lens or filter which prevents him or her from recognizing the full range of options that are available. (The utility and limitations of different sets of perspectives on change are discussed further in Chapter 2.)

In the category of leadership and participation, some key dilemmas are as follows:

- High vs. low administrative involvement and control--whether the administrator stays actively involved throughout the change process, and how much the administrator controls the decisions that are made;

- High vs. low faculty involvement and control--whether the faculty are involved in decision making and in planning for implementation, how many of them are involved, and how much influence they have over decisions that are made; and

- Open vs. closed relationships with the community--whether parents or other community members will be encouraged to participate in the change effort, especially in decision making.

Key dilemmas in the broad area of strategies and tactics include:

- Product vs. process--whether to adopt a concrete "product," such as a new curriculum package or materials, or to attempt changes in methods, behaviors, and practices;

- Reliance on outside expertise vs. self-reliance--whether or not to look outside the district for innovations that could be locally adopted, and whether to seek outside expertise in the analysis of local problems and the selection of a remedy;

- Fidelity vs. adaptation of resources--if an innovation from outside the district is adopted, whether to modify the innovation or implement it exactly as it was designed;

- Validated vs. non-validated resources--whether to accept only innovations that have been tested and proven to be effective, or to give equal consideration to innovations that appear valid in the judgment of professionals;

- Integration vs. autonomous implementation--whether to choose an innovation that can stand alone, or one that can be integrated with existing programs;

- Limited vs. comprehensive goals--whether to attempt large-scale changes that may appear to be grandiose, or to plan more modest changes that may not have as much impact; and

- Formalization vs. naturalism--whether to let informal processes determine the direction of the change effort, or to devise formal structures and procedures for defining a problem area, choosing an innovation, planning for its implementation, and monitoring its use.

Finally, in the area of readiness and contingencies, there are these dilemmas:

- Initial readiness: Go vs. no go--whether or not current conditions indicate that a change effort initiated at this time has a good chance of success, and

- Contingency management: Continue vs. terminate--if circumstances change, and the innovation appears to be in jeopardy, whether to end the project (assuming the barriers are insurmountable) or to take some action that might still save the project.

OBJECTIVES OF THE VOLUME

It would be a happy state of affairs if one could draw from these case studies a list of unambiguous propositions about planned educational change that would give unerring guidance to administrators. Unfortunately, this state of affairs does not exist. In the first place, these cases are not a true sample of the universe of planned change efforts in schools; nor are they a true sample of all the schools participating in a particular program, since our main concern in selecting them was to illustrate different approaches and outcomes. Secondly, since the amount of attention given to the many features of each setting varies tremendously across cases, and since some features are almost completely ignored in some instances, these cases cannot be used to identify those factors that critically affect outcomes independently of all other factors. Third, and perhaps most significant, even if the above limitations did not exist and we could arrive at a scientific set of propositions, it is doubtful that such a theory would be of much value to administrators in the course of their day-to-day decision making.

There are two reasons for this seemingly unorthodox statement. First, it is nearly impossible for educational managers to collect all the information they would need to determine whether a proposition about planned change applies unambiguously to their setting. The propositions that are developed by the social sciences are highly contingent on a number of conditions. Thus, they become truly relevant only if one has accurate knowledge of such conditions, including community attitudes, the change management skills of teachers, student interests and abilities, organizational constraints, the nature of faculty relationships, and much more. Administrators are busy enough without being required to behave like researchers, but neither can they afford to act blindly in accordance with general rules. Since the propositions of social science are probabilities based on general tendencies found among a large number of cases, it is possible that an administrator's own situation is an exception to a given proposition. By behaving in rigid accordance with a rule, therefore, he or she not only might fail to produce the desired outcomes, but also might do more harm than good.

A second reason for doubting the managerial efficacy of propositions in day-to-day affairs is that many kinds of events are ignored in the formulation of such propositions, events that can destroy the most validly designed local program. We have in mind such contingencies as tax revolts, staff turnover, desegregation orders, snow storms, teacher strikes, new fads, new mandates external to the school, and so on. Schools operate in a tumultuous environment of politics, legal rulings, business cycles, and acts of God. Any one of these unanticipated events can require a thorough reconnaisance of ongoing change efforts and a shift in direction.

What can these case studies contribute to the practice of educational administration? Several benefits spring to mind. They can broaden horizons beyond one's local setting, raise possibilities for action, pose issues and probable problems, stimulate new ways of thinking about goals, inspire one with the courage to try, and suggest provisional touchstones for managerial action. They also make clear that what seems to be a simple, straightforward process of managing change can become quite complicated, that unanticipated events can derail one's best intentions, and that the potential for failure should never be ruled out. In sum, case studies enlighten and stimulate rather than give specific recipes for action.

This enlightenment process can be greatly assisted by noting some of the ways in which others have looked at planned change efforts in general. Nothing is more frustrating or intimidating to a student than to be exposed to a welter of inexplicable events that are supposed to represent one's occupational world. One can become so sensitized to the complexities of life and to alternative modes of coping that one is unable to behave in a self-assured, spontaneous manner. And so, to help the reader avoid this problem, the following chapter of this book synthesizes three perspectives that have been taken by researchers in the analysis of school change efforts: the rational perspective, the political perspective, and the social systems perspective. The reader may then form his or her own conclusions on the usefulness of these perspectives through the analysis of the case studies.

The objectives of this volume are:

1. To provide practicing administrators (and students of educational administration) with new ways of thinking about the process of school change;

2. To provide them with case materials that can broaden their awareness of the varying conditions under which planned change can occur, and which give them the opportunity to try out the new ways of thinking about change; and

3. To alert them to certain key dilemmas that face all managers of organizational change, in order that they may consider the implications of various responses to these dilemmas.

In sum, the overall purpose of this volume is to provide present and future administrators with the analytic tools they will need to design appropriate and effective strategies for the management of school change, tailored to varying situations. The audience for this volume may include administrators at all levels within local school systems, including principals, superintendents, their assistants, curriculum coordinators, and program specialists. In this group we may also include the staff of intermediate service districts or agencies. Although these staff are not administrators within the local school systems, the trend is for them to assist in, and even to lead, curriculum change efforts in member school districts.

OVERVIEW OF THE CASES

The schools and school districts whose experiences are described in this volume had this in common: each one was a client site for the Research and Development Utilization (RDU) Program sponsored by the National Institute of Education (NIE) between 1976 and 1979. This federal program was designed for the following purposes:

1. To help schools alleviate specific, locally defined problems in the areas of basic skills and career education;

2. To help school and community personnel learn about products of educational research and development (R&D) that might be used to alleviate school problems; and

3. To increase understanding of how the local program improvement process can be better managed and become more effective.

The fact that the schools' change efforts were supported, and in some cases stimulated, by a federal intervention program naturally had some effect on the nature of these efforts. It is therefore important to understand the design elements of the RDU program that may explain or clarify specific incidents in the case studies.

First, the RDU program was designed to assist with planned change efforts organized and managed at the school or school district level. Thus, none of the cases in this volume deal with individual teacher innovation or the natural diffusion of new ideas or educational practices. Second, the RDU program advocated a systematic, problem-solving approach to school improvement generally accomplished through sequential, though somewhat overlapping, stages: identification of a problem (or set of problems), examination of alternative solutions, selection of an appropriate solution, implementation of the solution, and continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the solution is incorporated as part of the routine local practices. Third, the design of the RDU program assumed that effective, transportable solutions to a great many school problems had already been developed by universities, applied research organizations, and school systems across the country. Therefore, the program stressed the importance of searching outside the district for existing products, which could be adapted to local circumstances. The products adopted by the sites were also supposed to have been validated, or proven to be effective, through applied research and development or extensive field testing. Fourth, there was strong pressure on the schools to engage in a participatory decision-making process, involving teachers, administrators, and in some cases parents and community members. The sites were generally required to form a local team that would be responsible for major decisions related to the change effort, such as the definition of a problem and the selection of a solution.

The RDU program also provided a considerable amount of support to the sites, in the form of funds, services, and information. These were provided through seven operational projects, organized at the state or multi-state level. (See Appendix for project descriptions.) Each of the projects selected and made available a pool of innovative products, which was referred to as a knowledge base. The projects' knowledge bases were developed as resources for identifying solutions to match client schools' needs. The projects also deployed educational field agents (two or more per project) called "linking agents," "facilitators," "coordinators," or "generalists." Most field agents were former teachers operating out of an intermediate service agency, a state agency, a local teacher center, a regional R&D lab, or a nonprofit educational service organization. The agents' functions were to coordinate the program resources that were available to each site and to help guide the local school personnel through the school improvement process. The field agents in each project were backed by a resource network of organizations and individuals, coordinated at the project level. From this network the sites received various kinds of services, including training in problem-solving techniques, initial screening of products relevant to each site's problem, abstracts of product information, syntheses of research knowledge, and in some cases special searches for products if none of those in the project's knowledge base were suitable. In addition, most of the projects provided sites with funds, either directly or indirectly, to pay for teacher release time and the cost of materials, travel, and consultants.

While the sites' change efforts were thus supported and, to some extent, shaped by the RDU program, the cases in this volume can be analyzed in a much larger context than the RDU program itself. In the first place, the funds provided to sites in the RDU program (from three to five thousand dollars) were not outside what many school districts can muster for an important change program. Even districts that do not have this kind of funding available internally are often successful in getting external funding from federal and state programs, such as Title IVc. Secondly, the consultant services provided to the RDU sites are available to most schools through arrangements with intermediate service districts, universities, educational R&D labs, regional educational information services, state departments of education, and so forth.

Most importantly, the theories tested in the RDU program were derived from cumulative research knowledge based on observation of numerous school improvement efforts. Even though the program placed certain constraints on the schools--for example, to engage in participatory decision making, to define problems before deciding on change strategies, to seek field-tested, empirically validated solutions, and to engage in systematic interaction with external providers of information and assistance--none of the required activities was totally foreign to typical school experience. The RDU program merely formalized these activities in order to study them; and, even so, there were many instances in which schools departed from the general project guidelines.

Twelve cases are included in this volume. They include elementary, junior high, and high schools, ranging in size from 250 to 1,200 pupils. They are located in five major regions of the country--Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Northwest, and Southwest--and in rural areas, small towns, suburbs, and large cities. Some serve children from very low-income, poorly educated families, while others are located in more affluent areas. There is one predominantly black school, several that are virtually all-white, and several with mixed student populations (including some that had undergone quite rapid changes in the composition of their student bodies in the years just prior to, and at the time of, these case studies). In short, these cases illustrate very wide-ranging circumstances.

Moreover, despite the fact that these sites faced similar problems (a feeling that basic skills or career education needed improvement in their districts or schools) and operated under similar programmatic constraints, as described above, their responses to these problems and their approaches to the process of school change varied enormously. This is most evident in the differences among the cases in how the managers of the school change efforts responded to the "managerial dilemmas" described earlier. Thus, there are cases in which the principal made all decisions unilaterally, others in which decision making was shared, and still others in which teachers made all the decisions on their own. There are cases in which the curriculum or organization of the school was entirely revamped, and others in which a single set of materials was adopted. There are sites which followed a very formal sequence of "problem-solving" steps, and others where the process was more informal or haphazard.

In most ways, then, these cases reflect typical school experience. The issue in each case was to decide upon and bring about changes to alleviate a specific educational problem, while at the same time making the best use of externally available assistance and complying with--or seeking compromises in--externally imposed constraints.

The reader may wish to know which of our cases are most relevant to the various practical dilemmas facing managers of school change. This information is provided in Table 1-1. It will be noted that the cases in

20

Table 1-1

PRACTICAL DILEMMAS ILLUSTRATED BY THE CASE STUDIES

ISSUE	LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION			STRATEGIES AND TACTICS							READINESS AND CONTINGENCIES	
DILEMMA / CASE	High vs. Low Administrative Involvement/Control	High vs. Low Faculty Involvement/Control	Open vs. Closed Relations with the Community	Product vs. Process	Reliance on Outside Expertise vs. Self-Reliance	Fidelity vs. Adaptation of Resources	Validated vs. Nonvalidated Resources	Integration vs. Autonomous Implementation	Limited vs. Comprehensive Goals	Formalization vs. Naturalism	Initial Readiness: Go vs. No Go	Contingency Management: Continue vs. Terminate
Bell	●	●		●					●		●	
Parker Valley	●	●								●	●	
Bayfield	●		●					●				
Sugarville	●	●		●			●					
Greenfield					●	●						
Sasquatch				●	●	●		●				
Penton	●					●		●	●	●		
Treeline				●		●		●	●	●		
Jefferson			●		●						●	●
Ogden								●			●	●
Galaxy			●		●					●		●
Cramer			●								●	●

this volume are grouped on the basis of their primary relevance to issues regarding leadership and participation (Part 2), strategies and tactics (Part 3), or readiness and contingencies (Part 4), yet most of the cases could be used to generate discussion of issues cutting across the three areas.

DEVELOPMENT OF CASES FOR THIS VOLUME

The RDU Program was an "action-research" program, meaning that it was established with the express purpose of contributing to knowledge about the effective management of school change. The contracts to the seven operational RDU projects stressed the need for adequate documentation and evaluation of their efforts, including a set of individual site case studies for each project. In addition, the RDU program selected an independent organization to conduct a general evaluation of the program. In November 1977 Abt Associates Inc., an applied social science research firm in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was awarded a three-year contract to design and implement a study of the program. The 46 case studies developed by the RDU projects were just one source of information for the Abt Associates study, which also called for a review of project documents, in-person interviews with project staff, field agents, teachers, and administrators, telephone interviews with field agents, a mail survey of teachers and administrators, several mail surveys of field agents, and interviews with NIE officials. The present volume is just one product of the overall study.

All but three of the case studies included in this volume were written by case study writers working for the RDU projects; the other three were written by staff or consultants of Abt Associates' research project. The cases were selected for this book because of their relevance to the major practical issues which form the organizing framework for this volume and because they represent diverse levels of "success" in terms of implementation of an innovation and overall organizational change. A final consideration was that the sites described in these case studies varied considerably in terms of their geographic environments, the income level of the populations they served, the types of problems they faced and the solutions they chose, and whether they were elementary or secondary schools.

The data for the case studies were collected independently by the case study writers. For the most part, the researchers followed their own analytic perspectives, chose their own methods, and pursued themes and events important to the individual sites. However, there were several conferences of case study writers during which common theoretical frameworks and case study outlines were developed as a mechanism for facilitating cross-site analysis.

The case studies were edited for this volume to highlight the practical issues discussed in the volume and to reduce their length. Site-specific analyses by the case study writers were reduced considerably, so that administrators reading these case studies would be more challenged to develop their own interpretations of the data. Finally, to protect the confidentiality of these cases, we have changed the names of all districts, schools, cities, organizations, and individuals---except the names of product developers and some nationally known education consultants. We have also altered some figures, such as school enrollment, staffing, etc., none of which affect the inferences that can be drawn from the data.

CONTENTS OF THE VOLUME

The remaining chapter in Part 1 presents perspectives for case analysis. The chapter focuses on different sets of assumptions about change which are current in both academic and practical texts. Three basic perspectives, or paradigms, are presented: the rational perspective, which is based on the administrative science model and focuses on the deliberate decisions of administrators and other actors; the political perspective, which emphasizes the process of conflict and compromise that characterizes change in most educational contexts; and the social systems perspective, which emphasizes the interdependence of actors and organizations in the educational system and the interaction of school culture and structure. The chapter also describes three separate levels of analysis to which these perspectives may be applied: individual actors, the school as an organization, and the surrounding community and social context. This discussion is used to sensitize the reader to different ways of thinking about change and to the assumptions about change that may underlie the reader's current perspectives on school improvement.

The twelve case studies are organized into three parts of this volume, each focusing on a different set of themes or issues in school improvement. The case studies in Part 2 emphasize issues related to leadership and participation. Included here, for example, are issues related to the roles of school administrators, teachers, and community members, as well as the relationship between teacher participation in the change process and feelings of staff ownership of the change decisions. The case studies in Part 3 emphasize strategies and tactics. These issues include critical decisions (for example, whether to attempt comprehensive or focused change), overall change strategies (for example, whether to adopt externally developed or home-grown solutions), and tactics for dealing with or taking advantage of the local context (for example, integrating federally funded efforts with other ongoing efforts). Finally, the case studies in Part 4 emphasize readiness and contingencies. Included here are critical events (such as teacher strikes) and characteristics of the school and its staff that affect the readiness of the school to accomplish a change program. Each of the case studies is followed by questions that could be used to stimulate discussion in a course on educational administration or to encourage the thinking of an individual reader.

The final chapter--Part 5, Chapter 15--includes an analysis of the case studies which is guided by the topical themes of the three case study chapters. While this analysis develops some generalizations about patterns that are apparent among the cases, the primary purpose is to further illuminate dilemmas and issues for the manager of change programs in schools, rather than attempting to provide prescriptions. Implications for educational administrators are presented in terms of the diversity of approaches appropriate in different contexts.

CHAPTER 2

PERSPECTIVES ON THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

Managing the process of change in schools seems to be one of the persistent dilemmas of school administrators. School improvement--whether it is fiscal, administrative, or curricular--hardly ever seems to occur smoothly. Administrators turn to many explanations for the problems that face them planning for and implementing new programmatic activities or structures in their schools. Note the different viewpoints in the following vignette, which involves three principals who have just been informed about a new state mandate requiring career education in the schools.

> Principal Blue: Adams Junior High does need a good career education program--but it's just going to be impossible. Every time I try to do something new, I get caught between the union president, who teaches in my school, and the superintendent, who wants to make sure that the teachers stay in their places. It's an impossible situation.
>
> Principal Green: Well, the teachers at Revere don't pay much attention to the union, and the superintendent hardly seems to notice us. But, I'll tell you, with a staff whose average age is over 50, and who really like to run a tight ship within their classrooms, you can't make too many changes. My problem is really the whole climate of the school; it's as old fashioned as they come. I'm afraid if I tried to introduce career education in the classroom, as some of the younger teachers and I would like to do, the older ones would just not give it any attention.
>
> Principal Tan: I can see what's going to happen--the central administration will panic and ram something down our throats. I think we shouldn't do anything until we sit down and figure out what our district-wide priorities are in career education. We need to collect better information--from parents, from local industry, and so on. Sometimes I think that crisis decision making is a way of life in this district. It wouldn't have to be that way if we could just allocate a few resources to better planning.

These administrators obviously have different ideas of the major barriers to change in their schools--but do these differences represent real differences in their school settings or in the behavior of the superintendent towards their schools, or are the differences they note a function of each administrator's own interpretation of similar circumstances? The answer is probably both: each school department, school, or district is different and has different problems, but individual administrators also bring their own experiences and preferences to the interpretation of each situation. The variety of ways in which administrators interpret their change opportunities is the subject of this chapter.

Whether or not they are aware of it, all administrators are equipped with a set of assumptions that guide their interpretation of what happens in their schools, and also their planning for the future. These assumptions constitute what some call "theories-in-use." Theories-in-use may be based, in part, on the administrators' intimate understanding of how their particular schools or districts work. In addition, most of us carry with us a broader set of assumptions about how the world works, which may be derived from such various sources as our parents' belief systems, our early college courses, or our political orientations.

Let us take an example of how different people have different theories-in-use. Below are two statements that can be made about how to improve schools:

- To improve schools we must first change the attitudes, values, and behavior of individuals.

- To improve schools, we must first make sure that they are "healthy" organizations.

Many people would agree with both of these statements; but if asked to choose between them, most would have no trouble selecting one as being more important. There are real differences, moreover, between the action implications of the two statements; the administrator who acts upon a basic belief that the individual is key to any successful change effort may well design a different approach to implementing change than the administrator who believes that a supportive local environment is most critical. Administrator A, for example, may spend most of her time working with individual teachers who are having problems with a new reading program. In contrast, Administrator B might allocate his time more heavily toward making public relations presentations about the program in local newspapers.

The administrator's theories-in-use are therefore very important in determining his or her effectiveness as a leader. If the strategies for managing change correctly anticipate problems, conflict, or other issues, and encourage the design of appropriate solutions, the change program is likely to be a success. Where the theories-in-use are incomplete or inappropriate, however, they may narrow the administrator's vision, and blind him or her to plausible interpretations of his or her situation, not to mention ways of improving it. For example, Principal Blue in our earlier vignette may be discouraged about introducing change because of conflict between the superintendent's office and the union. Since he believes that he cannot, at least in the short run, change the power relationship and conflict, he rejects the possibility of change. Looking at the same setting from another perspective, however, Principal Blue might attempt to design a change program that could be implemented within a conflict setting--one which attempts to maximize the incentives for individual participation among all groups, while not attempting to solve the larger political conflict. Such a strategy might not work, but we have seen many instances in which it will. We have even seen instances in which conflict was turned to the advantage of a change program by utilizing the cohesiveness developed among teachers during strikes to support school-wide curriculum development efforts.

Similarly, Principal Green, who is discouraged about change because of the age and traditionalism of his teachers, appears to have overlooked the many administrative techniques that can be used to increase the dissatisfaction of his secure staff with their current approaches. Has he overlooked, for example, ways of increasing (or highlighting) external pressures for change, either from the superintendent or from parents? Or has he considered making special efforts to "convert" one of the more influential and popular traditional teachers to an interest in career education? By treating all of the older teachers as an undifferentiated and powerful group, he may well be overlooking the leverage that he can exert.

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss some of the different perspectives that may be found in the broad set of literature on planned change. The reason for presenting multiple theories of change is not, of course, to provide an exhaustive synthesis of years of research and more speculative writing in a relatively brief chapter. Instead, the review of different theories will be more cursory, and directed at the implications that they may have for the way in which managers may approach the change process, or behave during the change process.* The ultimate goal of this chapter is not to prescribe one way, or even a set of "best" ways of viewing the planned change process. On the contrary, it is intended to reveal the complexities of change both in theory and real life settings, and to encourage the reader to move toward a multi-faceted approach to the planning of change. As has been noted in Chapter 1, both administrators and administrative theorists too often fall into the trap of over-simplification, which results in sets of simple propositions about how best to manage change, or a single preferred approach. This chapter emphasizes the value of multiple lenses or frameworks through which the case studies presented in later chapters can be viewed--and which can also be applied to the reader's own school and district settings.

All told, we will describe nine different models of the change process which are currently found in either theoretical discussions of organizations or textbooks on administration and management. After presenting the different models, we will discuss their implications for the analysis of change strategies.

Before turning to our discussion, a brief note on terminology may be helpful. In our discussion we will use the terms theory and perspective interchangeably to refer to a very broad set of assumptions about how the change process unfolds. Within each theory or perspective, we assume that there are a variety of different models. The term model is used to refer to a way of interpreting the behavior of individuals and organizations that emphasizes certain components of a broader theory or perspective.

THEORIES OF CHANGE

There are as many different ways of classifying theories of change as there are writers about change. Some have divided theory into disciplinary perspectives, based on psychology, sociology, political science, and anthropology (Argyris, 1975; Louis and Rosenblum, 1978; Zollschan and Hirsch, 1976). Others look at cross-disciplinary trends, and emphasize categories such as rational versus system perspectives (Deal and Nutt, 1979; Rosenblum and Louis, 1981). In this chapter we will choose a relatively simple classification of general theories of change which conforms loosely to a common three-fold division into rational, political, and social systems theories (see Allison, 1971; House, 1981; Sieber, 1972; Zaltman et al, 1977). The basic assumptions of each theory are as follows:

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*The reader who is interested in pursuing any of the perspectives presented in this chapter in more depth is encouraged to review the bibliography.

- Rational theory: Based on the administrative science model, the rational perspective emphasizes formal decision making and planning, and the features of decisions that can be predicted or controlled by the administrator or other actors.
- Political theory: The political perspective emphasizes the power structure of the system, and the process of conflict and compromise that characterizes change in most educational contexts. It also attends to the ways in which the exercise of influence and control affects the outcomes of change.
- Social systems theory: The systems perspective emphasizes the interdependence of actors and organizations in the educational system. In this perspective emphasis is placed upon the interactions of the structure and culture of the school.

What is especially interesting about the three theories is the way in which they form a continuum with respect to the degree of autonomy, or freedom of action, that is assumed. Thus, the rational theory is based on the assumption that men and women are free to determine their destiny within very broad bounds. On this view, a good school administrator collects all the best information that pertains to a clearly defined problem, reaches a conclusion based primarily on that information, and implements his conclusion without serious let or hindrance from the world around him. At the other extreme, the social system perspective implies that events are often beyond our control, that structures of opportunity and constraint are dictated by history or the functional needs of society, and that the cultural and relational attributes of human beings are not easily altered. Thus, school administrators are seen as being influenced by their personal values, the collective values of those around them, unanticipated events, and certain inherent properties of educational systems.* Quite obviously, there are many occasions when social system properties thwart the most arduous efforts of change agents. This is most obvious in the case of financial resources, the lack of which was a critical problem in many of the case studies presented below. When sufficient funds are available, environmental properties can still place barriers in the way of goal achievement. Indeed, what is commonly referred to as the "readiness" of a district or school for planned change is often determined solely by system properties. Note that such preconditions, whether they be negative or positive, are very difficult to alter. This is a typical feature of the social systems perspective.

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*Some inherent properties of educational systems that are said to affect planned change are vulnerability to the environment, diffuse goals, a weak knowledge base, the semi-professional nature of teaching, and a non-competitive market structure. See Miles (1981), Sieber (1972), and Pincus (1974).

The political perspective reflects a sort of compromise between these two extremes of freedom and constraint. On the one hand, it pays its respects to the rational perspective in its recognition of manipulation, force, and the exercise of authority as tools of action available to all administrators. Clearly, emphasis on such means of influence is founded on an assumption of high autonomy--Machiavelli's Prince is viewed as a paragon of rational political behavior largely owing to the fact that he enjoyed enormous latitude in the exercise of guile and other political techniques. On the other hand, the political perspective also acknowledges certain of the constraints implicit in social systems theory. It notes that compromise and defeat are inevitably part of the political process, that an accumulation of vested interests and countervailing powers sets limits to what one can obtain from others, and that one's authority is based on the consent of the governed and is therefore subject to diminution. Even in the case of the Prince, Machiavelli realized that force must be tempered as soon as possible lest the population grow to detest their subjugator and plot his overthrow. It is this antagonis between freedom and constraint that gives the political perspective its peculiar vitality and its pertinence to modern pluralistic society.

In addition to these three general theories, people also hold different beliefs about what is of primary importance in accounting for the outcomes of any activity or event in schools. Here again we can identify three distinct types of beliefs:

- Individuals: In school-based curriculum change, individual personalities of teachers, principals, and other actors in the system may have an impact on both the process and outcomes.

- Schools as organizations: Schools as formal organizations have a variety of properties that may affect any change process. The implementation of most curriculum improvements (and many other innovations) is likely to have some schoolwide impacts and involve some alterations beyond the individual level.

- School context: The community and the larger social and cultural environment have a great influence upon the school, setting both opportunities and constraints that limit the ways in which, and the degree to which, schools can change.

The three general theories described earlier and the three sets of beliefs described above can be viewed as two distinct dimensions--each theory can be applied to the individual, the organizational, and the school context. Table 2-1 shows a brief summary of the nine different models on change which emerge when the theories and beliefs are arrayed.

Table 2-1

ALTERNATIVE MODELS OF CHANGE

	Theoretical Perspectives on Change		
Beliefs about What Is of Primary Importance	RATIONAL PERSPECTIVE	POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE	SOCIAL SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE
INDIVIDUALS	Staff incentives: emphasis on personal incentive systems	Entrepreneurial: career and status maximization; "powerless functionary" image of teachers	Social man: individual location in and interaction with social/professional environment
SCHOOLS (as organizations)	Goal attainment: organizations as planned social units	Power structure: emphasis on the operation of formal and informal power structure	Classical systems: emphasis on the interaction between the structure and the culture of the organization
CONTEXT/ ENVIRONMENT	Environmental information: the school context as a source of expertise and information for decision making	Reflective: schools mirror and serve the value system of the larger society	System dependency: environment as a source of resources upon which the school is dependent

The basic elements of each cell are briefly described in the table; the following pages describe in greater detail how each of the models is applicable to an understanding of change processes in schools. Attention is paid not only to the basic assumptions underlying each model, but also to the strengths and weaknesses of each in assisting the administrator in improving his or her own performance as an instructional leader.

It is important to emphasize before beginning that, while each cell does represent a distinctive way of viewing the world, it is not possible to classify either theorists (or administrators) exclusively in a single cell. Most people apply multiple perspectives to different situations. An administrator, for example, may use primarily rational perspectives when designing a school improvement effort but a predominantly political perspective to explain why some of his or her efforts fail! Similarly, administrative theorists do not belong exclusively in one or another cell, although their work may reflect a predominant "theory-in-use."

The Rational Perspective

The rational perspective is by far the preferred "theory-in-use" of most administrators. This, of course, is not surprising since the perspective focuses on features of the school setting that administrators can do something about. However, it is critical to emphasize that the rational perspective, while reflecting traditional approaches to educational administration (Erickson, 1979) is, at best, a partial view of how effective management and planning must proceed. While it may be argued that the rational approach to the planning and management of change should be well tempered by doses of theory derived from political and systems perspectives, the absence of rationally-based management can be equally serious. Indeed, if the cases presented in the later chapters of this book are at all representative, school administrators are often no more likely to exhibit rational planning behavior than to show skill in managing the political or social system, despite their stated preferences.

There are three different rational frames which can be used both to explain what has occurred in schools and to plan for future activities. There are staff incentive models at the individual level, goal attainment models at the organizational level, and environmental information models at the level of the environment or context. Each of these rational perspectives adds a great deal to our ability to understand and analyze planned change activities, although, as will be discussed at the end of this section, an overemphasis on the rational model may constrain an administrator's ability to manage change effectively.

Staff Incentive Models. Two authors (one of whom is an ex-principal and the other an ex-superintendent) have noted that:

> Many administrators find individual personalities--although complex and volatile--easier to understand than the dynamics of complex systems such as schools and school districts. Administrators often overemphasize the cohesiveness and rationality of the system and their own ability to control (through formal means) the activity and sentiments of others (Deal and Nutt, 1979, p. 27).

At its most extreme this model views individuals as "complex information processing systems" making choices that will maximize their own objectives (March and Simon, 1958). In order to introduce change, one must simply ensure that new procedures are consistent with employee self-interest. This model is derived from the economists' assumption that the market reflects the choices of highly rational individuals who have the information and ability to maximize their own interests. The school administrator sensitive to this perspective may go beyond economic incentive systems. He or she might emphasize the school administrator's ability to understand the personal incentives of the other important actors in the school--teachers, students, and other professionals--and to design new programs that will not conflict with individual needs (Barnard, 1938).

One of the reasons school administrators cannot look to traditional economic reward systems is, of course, that the reward structure of school systems is quite flat; moreover, changes in the reward structure are largely out of the hands of the principal, and even of the superintendent in a district with strong professional associations or unions (House, 1974). There are few opportunities for rewards or promotions, no matter how well a teacher performs. Those promotions that do occur are often based upon seniority or certification (taking advanced degrees in specialized subjects, such as counseling) rather than pure merit, as would occur in an open market situation. If the school administrator had to depend entirely on the availability of promotion or pay increases to stimulate individual innovation, it is clear that any strategy that relied extensively on personal incentive systems would be limited in its success.

In planning a school improvement program, the administrator sensitive to this perspective would analyze what motivates his or her teachers--and also what serves as genuine disincentives (Benne and Birnbaum, 1953). For example, a modified incentives model would emphasize locating the characteristics of the school program which are irritating or unpleasant for teachers. If the sources of pain can be located, and the administrator can propose innovations that will help to remove or reduce this pain, then the personal incentives of teachers to participate will be increased. The administrator who understands his staff (and has access to some discretionary funds) can also provide positive incentives for individual innovation--for example, he can allow teachers who are interested in an innovation to travel to another school district to observe it in use, or to attend professional conferences and visit program developers who may provide information and assistance. Many teachers find travel and professional opportunities both personally rewarding and status enchancing.

In sum, while the ability of the administrator to manipulate the incentive system for individuals is often circumscribed by funding limitations and the basic organizational characteristics of schools, it can be of value. We can summarize the implications of this model for the management of change as follows:

> School administrators attempting to initiate change should ensure that the new program is compatible with the existing values and behaviors of their staff or they should make sure to introduce a prior change effort to modify relevant values and behaviors to be consistent with the new practice.

Goal Attainment Models. The rational theory of schools as organizations emphasizes the inherent desire on the part of schools and school professionals to maximize the goals of education (see Thompson, 1966). There are, of course, many pressures that reinforce the desire of schools to improve their performance, particularly on the student achievement objective. One clear pressure is, of course, the competency testing movement, which gives secondary schools in particular a dramatic incentive for improving performance. However, the imposition of competency requirements is merely a cap to the increasing professional concerns about the "productivity" of schools. Poor performance of students (or lowered performance) is usually met with administrative conflict as well as public outcry. Thus, the motivation to improve the school's effectiveness on some measures is ever present.

One important feature of schools that should also be emphasized is that, unlike many public organizations, there is generally a high level of commitment by the staff to goal achievement (Etzione, 1961). Thus, it is not just the top administrators who wish to improve school performance, it is also the teachers. Many surveys of teachers have shown that, while there is often disagreement about other goals of schools, there is enormous agreement that ensuring student achievement in basic skills is the top priority, and that emphasizing the learning of some key social values is also important.

A significant feature of the goal attainment model in operation is the need to specify concrete objectives at every level. Thus, for example, there has been considerable emphasis upon techniques for goal specification in schools, such as Management by Objectives, and Program Planning Budget Systems (PPBS) or zero-based budget systems (House, 1972). School administrators who have a strong goal achievement orientation often try to formulate (and get teachers to formulate) objectives at either the classroom or grade level--sometimes at the pupil level by performance contracting. Here, of course, the assumption is that breaking down a "BIG" goal into smaller and shorter term objectives may make it more meaningful as a motivator of behavior. The implications of the goal attainment model for the administrator include the following:

> School administrators attempting to initiate a change program should ensure that the goals and strategies of proposed activities or curricula are compatible with those currently predominating in the school or they should set appropriate and compatible organizational goals.

There have been many writers who have pointed out the strong limitations of the goal attainment model in school settings, however. First, the classic assumptions of the model are that goal attainment is a motivator because of the need for "organizational survival": market-based organizations that do not attain their goals are expected to go out of business. Schools, in contrast, can survive presumably forever as underachievers because they are legally mandated public organizations. Second, there is very weak knowledge about cause and effect in education. Even where there are clear goals, and a strong educational desire to increase effectiveness in meeting them, it is not always possible to select an intervention that will lead to that change. It is well known in educational research circles that programs which produce remarkable changes in student achievement in one district may fail to do so in another one next door. Furthermore, in practice there are enormous debates over the meaning of educational goals, and it is widely acknowledged that schools may have relatively little control over student achievement, which is known to be influenced by many other factors such as parental background, community values, and student peer culture. Thus, studies have shown that administrators (and presumably teachers as well) tend to view "failures" of goal attainment as out of their hands. The increasingly poor work climate in many schools also reduces teacher motivation for purely educational goal achievement--many teachers may become more tied up in achieving custodial objectives than in educationally related behaviors.

Finally, there is not always agreement about what constitutes a reasonable set of goals for schools, and disagreements about priorities among goals within the overall objective of student cognitive learning are rampant. Thus, the use of goals as a strong motivator in the change process may be frustrated by lack of consensus among those who are expected to make the changes.

Environmental Information Models. In these models, the environment is "a source of information...(which) is used by organizational decision-makers as one basis for maintaining or modifying particular processes and structures" (Aldrich and Midlin, 1978). Thus, whether or not a change program is initiated in a school is often dependent on the perceptions of administrators about how the relevant environmental actors (school board, parents, unions, funding sources, etc.) are responding to the school and will respond to the proposed changes. In order to understand how and why change comes about, we may need to ask not only what the relevant environmental actors are like but also how the administrators (or other key decision makers) perceive them (Weick, 1969).

One of the key features of the environment of the school is that it is increasingly uncertain and changing (Emery and Trist, 1965). Schools are no longer stable institutions in a stable setting. Information from the environment will affect the structure and functioning of the school. The degree of uncertainty of the information that the administrator receives from the school's environment may be a key to how the school should be effectively organized and run. On the one hand, where administrators perceive the environment to be changing and unstable, the most effective way of operating may be to decentralize decision making and to emphasize interpersonal contacts. This is true because the decentralized structure increases the flow of expertise and information from the environment to the administration (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967). In schools where the top administrators perceive the environment to be stable, on the other hand, centralized decision making and impersonal structures may be more effective.

Consider, for example, a small, rural school district which has a supportive community, no strong union, and little dependence on federal funds. This type of district will require the superintendent and the principals to pay relatively little attention to "sensing" the environment: since they can understand it easily, there is less need to involve many teachers, parents, or other individuals in order to arrive at acceptable decisions about educational programs (Rosenblum and Louis, 1981). In a complex urban system with a strong union, factions among the parents, a lot of dependence on alternative federal and state grants, and a rapidly shifting economic base, the administrators must spend a great deal of effort in finding out about how the environment is working before any major decision affecting the program can be made. This "sensing" of the environment will provide critical input which will improve both the quality and acceptability of plans.

The focus of this model is, in sum, on the need to have accurate information about the environment as top administrators make decisions about how the district and schools will be structured. Thus, the administrator who can anticipate information needs and is able to systematically search for information about the environment is engaging in a significant, rational process to support change in schools. The implications of the environmental information model for the innovative administrator is that:

> The school administrator attempting to initiate a change program should gather appropriate information and expert knowledge from local and more distant groups to ensure the soundest plan for change.

The major limitation to this model is, of course, that good information does not always lead to effective schools and change programs. Thus, we must begin to look at political and social systems perspectives in order to provide further explanation for the school change process.

The Political Perspective

Political theory adds a great deal to our understanding of the change process although, just as with the rational perspective, it provides a selective screen for viewing change in schools. Those who emphasize the importance of the political perspective begin with a basic belief that social cooperation is fragile, at best, and to understand how and why it occurs we must understand its stress points. The political perspective always implies the potential for conflict, and it assumes a world of scarce resources for the most part. However, it does not always assume that conflict is destructive or bad for individuals or organizations. Rather, as we shall see, conflict may be a necessary component of change processes.

At the individual level, the political perspective is reflected in entrepreneurial models of change which emphasize the motives and methods of the organizational elite. The most prevalent political perspective is the power structure model, which emphasizes the importance of the formal hierarchy and informal power relationships within the school. Finally, at the context/ environment level, we find reflective models, which view the school as a mirror of the values and preferences of the larger social system. Each of these models is discussed below.

Entrepreneurial Models. The power and influence of individual actors in the system are the focus of the entrepreneurial model. There are two key assumptions made, first, that most innovations in schools occur because of a key individual's desire to maximize his or her status, power, or visibility.

Conversely, innovations that do not take root often do so because they threaten the status or privileges of some powerful individuals. A number of studies have found that sponsorship of a new program by an individual is critical to its success (Yin, 1979; Corwin, 1973). Other studies also show that the values of the elite managers in the organization are among the strongest factors in accounting for how much innovation occurs, while the values of the staff in general are of little importance (Hage and Dewer, 1973).

A second assumption is that teachers are, on the whole, "powerless functionaries" (Sieber, 1972). For example, teachers are often viewed not as independent professionals, free to make their own choices about how best to serve the needs of their students. Rather, they are seen as employees in an essentially bureaucratic structure. Others have emphasized the relatively low levels of commitment on the part of teachers to their profession (Geer, 1966), and the fact that union contract negotiations have tended to emphasize salary and work load issues rather than quality of education issues (House, 1974). All of this added together suggests, to some, that the initiative for, and the support of, innovation must come from individual administrators (Wayland, 1964). The emphasis on the development of "teacher proof" curriculum materials over the past 20 years has further reinforced the view of individual teachers as powerless functionaries.

If we were to summarize the implications of this model for the practice of school improvement, we might conclude that:

> The school administrator should use the existing formal and informal power structure to maximize support for the change effort. Particular attention should be paid to powerful individuals, as they have great control over the course of the change process.

The above image of the school clearly reflects some of the genuine conditions which underlay the relationship between individual power relations in the school and innovation. However, as with the other models we have discussed, this one is both limited and only partially accurate. We know that many administrators have found that captaining a ship of innovation in the stormy waters of a school is anything but simple. Teachers who, on some occasions, behave as powerless functionaries may, on others, become fully able either to resist an innovation imposed from above or to initiate innovations of their own. In addition, the ability of the individual administrator to develop an innovative program may be severely constrained (or supported) by his or her administrative colleagues. We will, therefore, turn now to a politically based perspective which emphasizes structures and groups rather than the role of individuals.

Power Structure Models. Every school contains both a formal authority structure, embodied in an organization chart, and an informal power structure, which usually varies somewhat from "the way things are supposed to be." Unlike the entrepreneurial model described above, this approach focuses not on individuals and their power (or lack of power) but on groups.

There are a number of different ways of looking for "factions" or interest groups in the school. One may identify official role groups that have different views of how the school should work--teachers and administrators, for example, frequently see things differently as a group and engage in conflict and negotiation regarding how the school will be structured or what change activities may be planned. Similarly, individual schools may believe themselves to be unique and separate from the central office and its staff, and this sense of separateness may involve perceived or actual disagreements. Conflict between school and central office is frequently exacerbated by the fact that the central office controls most of the resources, but the school ultimately controls the instructional process (House, 1981). Schools may compete with one another over scarce resources in some districts, while in others there may be other interest groups that reflect differences in a philosophy of education. For example, the issue of a basic skills emphasis versus a more humanistic emphasis continues to pervade the entire American education structure.

One way of looking at conflict emphasizes the fact that it uses a lot of energy which could, under other conditions, be put to better use. Others believe that conflict is inherently bad because it reflects basic problems in the educational system--if we all agreed about our goals for children, we would be able to avoid the arguments. However, many point to evidence that suggests that a school system without conflict is also one without stimulation and new ideas and possibly one without commitment. Some studies have found that the amount of conflict between role groups in a school system is positively associated with the implementation of innovations (Rosenblum and Louis, 1981). Others have noted that conflict is more pervasive in those schools that have the most professionalized, active staffs (Corwin, 1965). Finally, there are many who believe that conflict is a necessary component of the cycle of evaluating and verifying system goals, and that through conflict and compromise, we build systems that both care and are coherent. (This latter view assumes, of course, that, when conflicts arise, they are resolved.)

Another way of looking at power structures and innovation, however, emphasizes the distribution of influence and authority in the formal school structure. This is a source of tension within the system which cannot be resolved through compromise. Many view the typical "top-down" process of introducing innovations as destined to fail, either because (1) the teachers resent having new activities imposed upon them, or (2) administrators have so little understanding of life in the classroom that they fail to anticipate resources that are needed to make the innovation work (Gross, et al, 1971). Those who see the formal power structure as a significant barrier to innovation in schools often advocate power equalization--changes in the authority structure which give teachers (or others with less power and influence) more chance to participate in making decisions that will affect their work. Participatory decision making was officially part of the strategy that was used in most of the cases that follow in Chapters 3 through 14 although there was considerable variation in how much participation was allowed in different settings.

The power structure model has implications for the management of change that are well known to most line administrators, but which are, perhaps, less well attended to in practice. One implication, for example, is:

> The school administrator attempting to initiate a change program should ensure that appropriate groups are involved in making decisions and that debilitating conflicts are resolved.

Another, perhaps more Machiavellian, implication is:

> The school administrator attempting to initiate a change program should coopt groups that might potentially oppose his or her plans by including them extensively in the decision-making process.

The power structure model views the school and school district as something of a self-contained world. Many of the analyses of schools using this perspective are rich in their understanding of the dynamics of interaction between different role groups or others. However, the power structure model misses another important element of the political perspective, which involves the relationship between the local school system and other structures that affect it.

Reflective Models. The basic assumption of reflective models is that schools exist, to a large extent, to serve the needs of the larger society. As a consequence, the school is largely constrained to make changes that are consistent with existing social values and social structures. Many writers who use reflective models could be classified as political radicals--they emphasize the ways in which schools are used to retain the existing class and social structure and stress the school's function in socializing students to accept current middle class value systems (Bowles, 1972). However, there are many writers who do not share this radical interpretation, but emphasize local politics and their influence. Some of the earliest studies of American communities revealed in detail the ways in which community attitudes and power structures constrained the choices of professional educators as well as dictating "acceptable" behaviors (Waller, 1932). While teachers in most communities are now more insulated from direct pressures due to finance, school administrators are still vulnerable to non-professional evolutions, particularly as more and more communities begin to close their schools.

Others emphasize the ways in which the larger set of structures in American education have come to constrain the choices of local schools. Wayland (1964), for example, points out that the autonomy of local school systems is a myth, since the content of education is largely determined by national textbook publishers, by institutions of higher education which set standards for acceptable performance and knowledge, by ancillary national organizations such as the AFT and NEA, and by other social trends such as the physical mobility of American families which requires a curriculum that is sufficiently homogeneous across schools to permit children to transfer from one district to another. Still other writers have attempted to show how the ways in which school districts behave are largely bounded by the requirements and funding opportunities that are imposed at the state and federal level--as every school administrator knows, the number of required programs demanding local funding increases every year.

In sum, the reflective model emphasizes the ways in which the choices available to a school are constrained by political structures and powerful vested interests. Clearly a change program that does not take into account social structure and value systems that impinge upon the school--both those within the local community and those in society at large--is likely to run into trouble. To summarize the implications of this model for the administrator, we might conclude that:

> The school administrator seeking to introduce a change should ensure that powerful political constraints in the environment are adequately assessed, and ensure that the change strategies avoid arousing opposition from powerful groups in the environment.

The Social Systems Perspective

Social systems theory views the school as an organized set of relationships. There are several key concepts in the social system perspective. First, there is the notion of *structure*, or the formal ways in which the relationships between people, or departments, or different schools within a district are organized. The notion of structure subsumes features of the school such as rules and regulations, the division of labor, and the job descriptions for key actors. Second, there is *culture*, which refers to the norms and values which are held in common by the participants in the school. Finally, there is the concept of *interdependence of parts*. Each school is viewed as a collection of units or parts that are tied together. Changes in one part of the system (for example, in the principal's role) will have an impact on other parts of the system (for example, the teachers).

Each of these concepts is particularly relevant to models of change at the different levels. At the individual level, there are *social man models* which emphasize the ways in which individual behavior is affected by the social and organizational context. At the organizational level, we can identify *classical systems models*, which emphasize the relationships between structure and culture within the school. Finally, at the environment/context level, there are *environmental dependency models*, which focus on the need to obtain a "fit" between particular environments and school characteristics.

Social Man Models. The individual teacher or administrator is embedded in a dense network of social and professional relationships. There has been considerable research that shows that these networks will have a great impact on the individual's behavior with respect to innovation and change. Carlson (1965), for example, found that the friendship patterns of superintendents were associated with the spread of New Math adoptions within a county. The superintendents whose districts were early adopters of New Math were those who were more highly regarded by their peers. New Math then tended to spread to those who were friendly with the "social stars." Last to adopt were those who had few friendships with other superintendents. This phenomenon has been replicated in many other contexts, both within and outside of education. Thus, for example, other studies have shown that teachers who spend more time talking about innovative ideas and new information with their peers are more likely to use the information (Louis, 1979).

Another social system variable that is a key to individual behavior is the degree of localism versus cosmopolitanism. Individuals who have most of their social connections within a particular social system are less likely to be early adopters of new ideas than those who have many friendships or acquaintances outside. One easy way of thinking about localism and cosmopolitanism is to ask where an individual comes from--has he always lived in his present community, and worked in the same school system, or has he recently been hired from the outside? Another is to ask whether the individual frequently seeks information or advice from people outside the school or district (for example, from the state department, from universities or regional service centers) or whether they are most likely to turn inward to a local specialist (Merton, 1968). One author has found that there is a big difference, for example, between "career-bound" and "place-bound" superintendents. The career-bound superintendent is consciously ambitious and advances quickly in his or her career by moving between districts to better jobs. The place-bound superintendent comes to higher administrative positions more slowly and is usually promoted from within. Career-bound superintendents are more likely to sponsor new programs and innovations than are place-bound superintendents (Carlson, 1972).

The values of a social system also have an enormous effect upon the behavior of individuals within that system. Much of the research has focused on the effects of school climate and values upon student behavior and achievement (McDill and Rigby, 1973; Moos, 1979; Barker and Gump, 1964). However, climate and values also have significant effects on teacher morale and teacher behavior. Research has also indicated that the principal can have a great deal of impact upon the value system and attitudes of the teachers (Gross and Herriott, 1964; Moeller, 1964).

The social man model emphasizes the operation of natural communication and influence patterns. However, there are still implications that may be drawn for the school administrator who seeks to affect the natural process:

> The administrator seeking to introduce change into a school setting should find and use existing social networks. Change efforts should begin with individuals who are central to the communications system and who are role models.

Predicting whether an innovation or new curriculum will "take" in a given school is more complicated, however, than knowing the predispositions of individuals within that system. We must also understand how the school functions as an organization and its larger setting.

Classical Systems Models. This model views the school as an input/throughput/output system for producing and delivering services. The "inputs" to the system (or "raw materials") are students and staff members. The "outputs" are educated children. The "throughput" is the educational process. Many systems analysts have noted, however, that the school differs from many other kinds of production organizations because the throughput process is very complex and not very well understood (Perrow, 1970 Corwin and Edelfelt, 1977). There is no "science of teaching"--the number of exceptions to any rules of how best to teach a child are enormous, and teachers must rely heavily on experience and "craft" knowledge in order to carry out their jobs. The greater the uncertainty within the system about the throughput process, the more critical the press of local structural and cultural issues becomes in predicting how the school will function. In other words, if the teacher *knew* that if he or she did A, then the students would learn B, the importance of the values and organization of the classroom would clearly be of lesser importance.

Many studies have shown that characteristics of the school's structure and culture appear to produce either adaptive, innovative schools or less innovative schools (Baldridge and Burnham, 1975; Louis and Rosenblum, 1978; Corwin, 1972). Thus, for example, innovative schools tend to have structures that are larger, have more central coordination of teacher behavior in classrooms, and have larger numbers of specialized positions within the teaching staff. Schools with a strong cultural emphasis on communication and sharing between staff members, openness toward identifying school problems, and a strong staff commitment to pupil autonomy are also more innovative.

Rather than looking for characteristics of schools that help to explain why some succeed in adapting new ideas to their context while others fail, some authors have tried to characterize overall trends in the structure and culture of American schools. For example, it has been noted that the principal is key to any major change effort but that (1) most principals are not trained for this type of leadership, and are overloaded with many administrative duties which divert them from behaving as instructional leaders, and (2) variability among principals and high turnover in many principalships make the development of coherent, long-term improvement efforts difficult (Rosenblum and Jastrzab, 1980). Similar analyses of problems in the structuring of teacher roles and the teacher subculture have been made (Lortie, 1975; Sarason, 1971).

One recent overall characterization of the school as a system has major implications for the administrator's management of the change process. Schools are viewed as diverging from the classical systems assumptions in one very important respect: different parts of the educational system--classrooms, schools, and district--are not always highly interdependent. Rather, school systems are "loosely linked." A number of authors (Weick, 1969; Deal and Nutt, 1979; Rosenblum and Louis, 1981) have argued that the relative autonomy of teachers within classrooms, and the frequently high levels of independence of schools from district office influence make it difficult to introduce systemwide change. We have frequently observed that district-mandated programs are used in very different ways in different schools (if they are used at all). Similarly, the individual teacher's tendency to supplement or supplant school-wide curriculum materials with those of his or her own preference mean that the educational process within classrooms varies widely.

While this model emphasizes characteristics of the school that are relatively difficult for the school administrator to change (and thus focuses primarily upon constraints), the model nevertheless has important implications for change management (Deal and Nutt, 1979). Some of these include:

> The school administrator initiating a change program should attend to the structure and culture of the school, and ensure that these are supportive of change.

An alternative implication might involve the need to create, through administrative actions, an appropriate structure and culture:

> The school administrator initiating a change program should engage in organization development to promote a "healthy" environment in which change can occur.

Finally, the school administrator might also draw the implication that he or she should simply be aware of the power of local characteristics to influence the course of change, such as the tendency for localized adaptations of any innovation.

Environmental Dependency Models. The environmental dependency model emphasizes the school's need to "exploit its environment in the acquisition of scarce and valued resources" (Yuchtman and Seashore, 1967). Four types of resources are critical: personnel, information, products and services, and operating funds. This approach assumes that organizations are dependent on their environment, but can also act upon it to some degree. A key to the model is the assumption that schools engage in both cooperative and conflicting relationships in order to maximize their ability to acquire resources.

The environmental dependency model assumes that the best way of judging whether a school is operating effectively lies in its ability to obtain the necessary resources to maintain, expand, and improve the educational functions of the school and district (Hage and Aiken, 1970). Organizations which expand their services are those which establish favorable relations with other organizations upon whom their programs depend (Pfeffer, 1972).

The environmental dependency model can apply to both the school and the district level. Discrepancies between districts in terms of resources are, of course, well documented. While resources do not always translate into better schools (Jencks, 1972) it is also clear that there are many school improvement activities that cannot take place without district-level resources. Thus, for example, one recent study showed that personnel characteristics had strong effects on the ability of rural schools to mount comprehensive change programs (Rosenblum and Louis, 1981), while another indicated that effective change required financial resources to support release time (Kell and Louis, 1980).

While in many cases differences between districts in terms of resources cannot be traced to administrative skill, there are also many in which administrators can make a difference. Administrators can be active in tapping external funding agencies, in increasing parent and local industry participation, and in public relations which assist in millage elections.

While the district is the basic unit for resource acquisition and distribution, the principal also has considerable influence over the flow of resources to his or her school. There are often significant differences in resources between schools within districts--differences that go far beyond the nature of the physical plant. These differences may range from the ability of one principal to recruit and retain better and more energetic teachers, to actual dollar differences, attributable to the principal's ability to persuade others of the urgency of the school's particular needs. In addition, some schools are better at locating "free" resources from district staff members, regional or intermediate education districts, or other sources. This can account for much of the difference between one school's ability to mount a major school improvement effort, while its neighbor in the same district cannot get off the ground for lack of resources. Thus, the administrator who can anticipate resource needs, and who is able to systematically and creatively search for ways of meeting those needs, is better able to support change in schools. And yet, it must also be emphasized that there are real differences in environmental dependencies between districts, and it is clearly not appropriate to compare the resource acquisition process in an affluent suburban district with that in a fiscally-pressed urban district with low property values, high unemployment, and other features which limit the total available resources. The implications for administrative action in a change program are clear:

> The administrator who initiates a school change program should scan the environment for all appropriate resources to support the change effort, and should recognize realistic resource constraints.

SUMMARY OF THE CHANGE MODELS

Our discussion of change models has presented a variety of ways in which the school improvement process may be analyzed and interpreted. The reader may or may not have recognized his or her own theories-in-use in this discussion. Since the purpose of this chapter is to shed some light on alternative ways for administrators to think about change, it is important to return to our matrix and summarize some of the action implications of the change models. From this discussion, it is clear that no individual model or perspective is "truer" or better than others: each has a compelling and unique contribution to make to an improvement of change management by school administrators.

Each of the theoretical perspectives (rational, political, and social systems) is associated with a broad assumption about the change process. These three assumptions are:

- Rational: To change schools, we must engage in rational planning and problem-solving processes.

- Political: To change schools, we must use (or alter) the existing power and influence structures.

- Social System: To change schools, we must adjust the change program to the environment, structure, and culture of the local setting. There are no simple cause-and-effect relationships between inputs and outcomes.

In addition we can also derive three assumptions from our beliefs about what is most important to the change process: individuals, schools as organizations, or the context in which the school is located.

- Individual as key: To change schools, we must first consider the attitudes, values, and behavior of individual teachers, students, or administrators.

- School organization as key: To change schools, we must first ensure that the school is a "healthy" organization.

- Context/environment as key: To change schools, we must first make sure that relevant groups and organizations in the environment can support and reinforce our goals and activities.

Table 2-2 represents a revised matrix, which substitutes some of the management implications of each change model for the descriptions in Table 2-1. The implications for each cell in the matrix were derived by combining change assumptions associated with the theoretical perspectives, and those associated with beliefs about what is important. Each of these implications was introduced earlier in the discussion of each model.*

In any actual change process, each of these assumptions has a great deal to offer as a guide to the administrator's behavior. Ideally, a well managed change process would consider all of the models and the action implications derived from them, and apply these insights in setting realistic goals, choosing strategies for reaching these goals, and assessing progress and outcomes. Of course, in the real world of the school administrator, it is unlikely to be possible to analyze and plan actions at this level of detail; and, indeed, too much attention to analysis may forstall action. However, any administrative behavior can be improved by broadening the theories-in-use that are used in a given setting.

The remaining section of this chapter illustrates how the perspectives may be applied to actual cases, and foreshadows some of the lessons that may be drawn from the cases included in this volume. Since each perspective contains only a partial view of reality, special attention is paid attention to the limits of each and, consequently, the ways in which they must complement each other, again by reference to the case study materials.

POSTSCRIPT: LIMITS OF THE THREE PERSPECTIVES

As described earlier, the rational perspective emphasizes the need for deliberate, informed decisions in the selection of explicit goals and the means for achieving them. (Interestingly enough, the goals uncovered in our cases were usually idealistic ones, such as improving the mathematical skills of junior high students, rather than maintenance goals, such as

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*It should be emphasized that these sample assumptions about how to manage change do not, by any means, represent a final prescription for administration, as noted above. Rather, as noted in Chapter 1, administrators must constantly weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each tactic in the light of changing circumstances in their local environments.

Table 2-2

ACTION ASSUMPTIONS FOR MANAGING CHANGE

Beliefs about What Is of Primary Importance	Theoretical Perspectives on Change RATIONAL PERSPECTIVE	POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE	SOCIAL SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE
INDIVIDUALS	Ensure that a new program is compatible with existing values and behavior, or try to change relevant values and behavior.	Use the existing structure of personal political power, both formal and informal, to maximize support for the effort.	Use existing social networks--start the change program with those who are key communicators and role models.
SCHOOLS (as organizations)	Ensure that change program goals are compatible with those of the existing organization, or set appropriate organizational goals.	Ensure that appropriate groups are involved in making decisions and that debilitating conflicts are resolved; coopt opposing forces.	Attend to the structure and culture of the school and ensure that these are supportive of change; engage in organizational development as necessary.
CONTEXT/ ENVIRONMENT	Gather appropriate information from local and more distant groups to design a better activity.	Ensure that powerful political constraints in the environment are adequately assessed; little change can occur if the environment opposes it.	Scan the environment for all appropriate resources to support the change, and recognize realistic resource constraints.

fending off parents or manipulating the faculty.) It should be kept in mind that the federal program on which our case studies are based reflected a rational problem-solving perspective in its stipulation that "validated" products be implemented following a systematic needs assessment and a search for solutions that meet explicit criteria, with teacher participation in both these activities. Several of our case study schools made a genuine effort to follow this model, while almost all complied with at least one of its component requirements.

The political perspective focuses on conflict and compromise, influence and control, and the role of vested interests in shaping events. All of our case studies reflect certain aspects of this perspective. Especially pertinent are Parker Valley, Ogden, and Jefferson where relationships between faculty and administrators played a key role in the change project. In one instance, Parker Valley, the determination of the teachers' association to retain its autonomy vis-a-vis the administration was a prime incentive for planning and participating in a new inservice program; when conflict with the administration and community arose, involving even the dismissal of teachers, the main purpose of the program became that of maintaining faculty cohesion and morale. As the case study puts it, the program was a place where they could discuss and share problems, and receive mutual support at a time when it was greatly needed. Similarly, in another case, Jefferson Elementary, the project was transformed into a mechanism for reuniting the faculty around professional goals following a bitter defeat in a district-wide strike for salary increases and greater security. And again, in Ogden, we read that "the teachers emerged from the strike as a cohesive unit with high morale." This, together with the departure of a reading specialist who had incurred the hostility of the language arts department by ignoring their customary prerogatives, caused the Ogden teachers to devote renewed energies to the change effort. In all three of these cases, then, we find that political conflict was not only a dominant feature, but was beneficial rather than destructive. Indeed, it is doubtful that the problem-solving projects would have survived without imbedment in a conflict situation. This is a possibility that is overlooked by those who stress the need for organizational harmony and external political support in the implementation of change projects.

Finally, the social systems perspective takes note of group values and relationships, organizational and environmental factors, and the functional needs of social structures that often take precedence over the needs and wants of individuals. Elements of this perspective are applicable to all of our case study schools. Thus, the role of such factors as the high level of professional attainment in Parker Valley, the departmental structure of Galaxy High School, the rural isolation of Bayfield, the lack of financial resources at Ogden, Sugarville, and Charles elementary schools, and the value placed by Greenfield's teachers on self-sufficiency--all of these features are matters of deep concern to the social systems perspective.

Certain aspects of the social system might be responsible for both success and failure of a change effort, but in either case individual initiative and action tend to play relatively minor roles. With regard to failure, even in a school that achieved very high commitment to implementation (Bell Elementary) we find that environmental characteristics placed barriers in the way of goal achievement. One of the principal's major goals was to improve the image of her virtually all-black school in the eyes of the district and the community and to reduce teacher turnover, yet this goal was not realized. As the case study points out, "The school's bad image was difficult to shake. As Principal Dewitt put it, 'Some judge the school just by its facilities and the fact that it is 99 percent black.'" Even district administrators shared this prejudice, failing to recognize the principal's accomplishments in producing schoolwide curriculum change. In this instance, the cultural environment of the school frustrated the principal's efforts. There are also occasions when the social system is responsible for achievement of goals. Indeed, what is commonly referred to as the "readiness" of a district or school for planned change is often determined solely by system properties, a topic that we shall have much more to say about later. But note that such preconditions, whether they be negative or positive, are difficult to alter or control. This is a typical feature of the social systems perspective.

By and large, the three perspectives reflect different degrees of autonomy on the part of central actors in the drama of planned change, as was observed earlier in this chapter. The rational perspective entails greatest autonomy, while the social systems perspective entails least. This observation gives us an important clue as to where the limitations of each perspective lie. It also indicates why it is necessary to view them as complementary approaches to understanding and guiding change, rather than as self-contained, mutually exclusive theories.

The limits of rational decision making, a perspective which assumes that persons are free to select options within broad limits, are perhaps the most obvious. Rational decision making is constrained by internal conditions, such as one's values, knowledge, and psychological attributes (anxiety, aggressiveness, power drives, and so forth), as well as by external factors. These limitations are revealed repeatedly by our case studies. Most obviously, unanticipated events such as teacher strikes (Jefferson, Ogden), court-ordered desegregation (Cramer), and staff turnover (Sugarville) often overwhelmed a school's best laid plans.

The limits of the rational "problem-solving model" were evidenced in a number of less obtrusive ways as well. One common departure from the model occurred with respect to needs assessment, which was a major component of the program's problem-solving approach. The assessment of needs was sometimes rather "slapdash," as demonstrated by the unilateral decisions about career education made by the administrators in Treeline (where Charles Elementary is located), and the second year decisions about inservice topics of a small clique of teachers in Parker Valley's teachers' association. Both cases suggest a tendency to pursue one's own interests at the expense of taking a rational inventory of the needs of others. Indeed, rarely were meetings of the local teams devoid of conflict and political maneuvering, processes that are anathema to the coolly rational decision-making model. In the case of Ogden Junior High, the Right-to-Read program foundered on the refusal of the language arts department to adopt it because, as the case study points out, "(the department) was being stripped of the responsibility for teaching reading in the school." In sum, there are personal incentives, group values, social needs, system properties, and untimely events that set severe limits on the rational problem-solving model.

Even less obvious than the early impact of these political and social system factors on the rational problem-solving perspective is its unanticipated impact on itself, so to speak. For there are occasions when an unyielding pursuit of the rational model can boomerang, that is, can have consequences that are self-defeating. Thus, a rigid emphasis on the various stages of the model seems to have alienated the faculty in Cramer and Galaxy. In the case of Sugarville Elementary, when the project's head office refused to allow the faculty to adopt a non-validated solution, the faculty's commitment was so severely undermined that the local project was eventually aborted. Here the rational model was defeated by the desire of the local staff to have a sense of ownership, self-determination, and security with respect to the chosen product, needs that were not satisfied by the scientific credentials of the products presented to them by the project's headquarters. The rational model might be especially prone to self-defeating consequences of this sort because of its denial of many key features of social and psychological reality.

At the same time, it should be underscored that the political and social systems perspectives tend to belittle the genuine efforts of many educators to act rationally, that is, to implement needed change on the basis of assessed needs and the best available resources. It also underrates the ability of some educators to alter basic organizational features of the school to do so. The example of Bell's principal in implementing IGE, and of Penton's staff in completely restructuring the curriculum to meet the learning goals of the district, are cases in point. (Ironically, Bell's principal enjoyed the requisite of autonomy for rational action precisely because she was ignored by the district office, which seemed to view the school as a hopeless enclave of cultural poverty.) Another example is the efforts by district administrators in Sasquatch to turn all resources over a five-year period toward developing a district-wide reading curriculum. The case study in this volume documents only part of that effort. Actively taking stock of one's inherited liabilities and assets, and drawing up plans on the basis of such knowledge, is a mode of action that tends to be soft-pedalled by the social systems perspective in particular.

The political perspective, in contrast, acknowledges the possibility of manipulation and the use of force to gain one's ends, which ends may well be dictated by rational considerations (a la Machiavelli's Prince). For example, the decision of the principal and reading coordinator in Greenfield to include in decision-making activities teachers who were resistant to change ("recalcitrants") in addition to teachers with more favorable attitudes toward innovation ("innovators") entailed the time-honored political practice of cooptation of hostile elements in the environment. Note that this practice is dictated neither by a rational decision-making model, which ignores the existence of value-based opposition to rationally derived needs, nor by a social systems perspective, which tends to view such value-based opposition as unalterable. Seen more broadly, this example of political manipulation shows that the readiness of schools for a change project need not be accepted as a given, which tends to be the viewpoint of the social systems perspective, but can to some extent be shaped by political action. Thus, one would not have expected the faculty at Bell Elementary to have accepted the major revamping of the program that was favored by the principal; but her formal authority, her independence from the district level, and her tactics in involving the faculty in brainstorming and decision making overcame the teacher's discouragement and engaged their commitment to the new program.

But even the political model has its limits, a major one being the assumption that action tends to be politically *motivated*. Thus, professional grounds for undertaking a change project, on the one hand, or properties of the social system that shape change independently of motivations, on the other, are deemphasized in deference to such incentives as power, security, and status. Considerable evidence could be adduced from our case studies to contradict this tacit assumption of the political model. One example will suffice. The secondary principal of Bayfield exercised broad control over all aspects of the school. "All teachers reported to him, and little went on without his knowledge," states the case study. And while he and the superintendent were careful to present a united front to the public, which entailed some gentle persuasion of resistant faculty from time to time, the principal's motivation for monopolizing authority does not seem to have been political. Indeed, he "freely admitted that his background--he had served in the military and operated his own business--influenced his management style." Moreover, he persisted in his advocacy of a career education program, in spite of the community's placing higher priority on art education. Indeed, it is hard to escape the conclusion that the principal felt compelled to introduce career education because of the limited job opportunities for local high school graduates, necessitating their move to other areas where they would be exposed to a wide range of unfamiliar jobs. This suggests a strong element of *rational* stock-taking. Also, it can be seen that he used his personal style of authoritarian management to gain his ends, a style that was derived from his military and business backgrounds, a factor of major concern to the *social systems* perspective. We see, then, that while the political perspective may be helpful in describing structures of influence and analyzing tactics of control, it cannot always be relied on to explain motivation. Elements of the other two perspectives must also be taken into account.

In sum, none of the three perspectives is adequate for a full understanding of the factors that enter into planned change efforts. Each perspective applies to a different set of events, and the significance of these events can vary widely from one setting to another, and even from one time to another within the same setting. This means that the practical utility of taking the different perspectives into account likewise depends on being alert to situational variation. The administrator must be constantly aware of the changing characteristics of his or her local environment in order to weave an appropriate course of action among selected aspects of the three perspectives.

In the following chapters we present a variety of cases of real school improvement programs in which administrators were faced with personalities, organizational characteristics, and community contexts that were an integral part of the story at each site. In reading these case studies and considering them both separately and together, readers should try to analyze them using familiar models and assumptions but also to expand their horizons by applying some perspectives that seem more distant from their own experiences.

PART 2

LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

CHAPTER 3

BELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Diane Kell

Sometimes a school's problems are so long-standing and so severe that piecemeal changes cannot begin to make a dent in them. In those cases, it takes a visionary administrator, lots of external help, and strong faculty leaders to accomplish a radical school change program. Even then, the benefits of change may not be apparent for a number of years.

This was certainly the case at Bell Elementary. One of 19 elementary schools in a district which also included six middle schools and four high schools, Bell Elementary had the worst image of any school in the district. Traditionally all black, it had remained over 90 percent black in spite of attempts at desegregation. The 425 students enrolled at Bell came from one of the poorest sections of the moderately sized southern city in which Bell was located: fully 80 percent of these students qualified for free or reduced-cost lunches; 40 percent had a parent who had not finished high school.

According to the school's principal, many parents in the Bell community were either unmotivated or unable to give their children the kind of preschool experiences that would prepare them for learning the basic skills. In the more extreme cases, the children had only the most limited, concrete vocabularies and had never been more than a few blocks from home. Although not all cases were this severe, 88 percent of the entering kindergarten pupils, in 1976, scored at the 20th percentile or below on a district-wide inventory of readiness for learning.

In the past, Bell had made several attempts to address the needs of these children. Five Title I teachers were working with 225 of the students; in addition, there were tutors from the universities and aides for the kindergarten and first grade. Several Title III proposals had been written, but none had been accepted.

None of the school's efforts seemed sufficient to overcome the impoverished backgrounds of the Bell student population. As the children progressed through school, they fell further and further behind in skill development; by the time they left the fifth grade, many still lacked basic skills in reading and math. Despite the acuteness of the students' problems, the teachers at Bell felt that their school was being neglected by the district. According to the principal, the district staff never seemed to have enough time to give Bell the help they needed. Moreover, the physical plant was in very poor condition; some requests for repairs or improvements remained on the district's maintenance list for years at a time.

For all these reasons, the morale of the Bell staff was very low. Many beginning teachers regarded a job at Bell as a "foot in the door." They hoped to be transferred to other schools as soon as possible, and, if they were not transferred, they felt bitter and believed they had been stigmatized by their tenure at the school. Teacher turnover was very high, ranging from

10 to 30 percent of the 25 teaching positions each year. Only a few teachers and the principal had been with the school for many years. They either had strong ties to the local community or were strongly committed to teaching low-income children. These teachers tended to exert a great deal of influence among the faculty.

About 70 percent of the faculty were white. Principal Lorraine Dewitt, who was black, had taught at Bell Elementary for 25 years. She lived in the community, her own children had attended Bell Elementary, and she was very much concerned with community improvement. Small, sweet-voiced, and soft-spoken, she could also be very stubborn and sometimes autocratic, according to other members of the school staff.

Dewitt had two goals: the first was to improve educational opportunities for children in the Bell community, and the second was to improve the school's image outside the local neighborhood. The district desegregation plans called for a 70-30 ratio of blacks to whites at Bell, and Principal Dewitt hoped to develop a program that, in her words, would sell itself.

GETTING STARTED

Dewitt had been principal of Bell Elementary for three years when she first heard of a new federal program to assist schools in finding and implementing solutions to school problems. She volunteered Bell Elementary as a site for the program while the project in her state was still in its proposal phase. In September 1976 the director of the district's teacher education center (TEC) informed her that the state-level project had been funded and that Bell Elementary had been selected as a local school site. A search was underway for a field agent, who would be located in the TEC and who would work with several schools participating in the project. Since the field agent had not yet been hired, the TEC director met with Principal Dewitt to explain the program more fully. Also present at this meeting were the district director of instructional services, the district curriculum coordinator, and Diane Rosen, a resource teacher who had just been assigned to Bell half-time.

One requirement of the project was that the principal name three school "facilitators" who would be trained in school problem-solving processes and who would then help guide the faculty through the problem-solving steps. Dewitt named herself, Diane Rosen, and a first-grade teacher, Marjorie O'Keefe.

The faculty as a whole was informed of the project during one of the weekly after-school faculty meetings. Most teachers supported the project, but not everyone was enthusiastic. One teacher said, "My first reaction was, what makes them think they can give us a solution to our problem?"

In October 1976 Lorraine Dewitt, Diane Rosen, and Marjorie O'Keefe attended a two-day orientation workshop for all field agents and school facilitators. They were accompanied by two members of the district office staff. When the facilitators returned to Bell, they shared what they had learned with the entire faculty. Acting on a workshop suggestion, they also had the faculty brainstorm problems and recorded them on newsprint. Copies of the problem list were distributed to the teachers.

HELP ARRIVES

In December Sharon Kirkwood, a teacher in the district and chairman of the TEC advisory committee, was hired as the field agent for the project. Although Dewitt knew Kirkwood from her work on the TEC advisory committee, she wasn't sure what to expect from her in her role as field agent. She said later, "It was easy to be apprehensive, because the district people usually don't have much time for you." However, since Kirkwood was assigned to work full-time with only three schools, all of which were located within a few miles of each other, she had plenty of time to help Bell. During the first year of the project, she visited the school several times per week and was always available whenever she was needed.

Dewitt and her staff greatly appreciated Kirkwood's help. As the principal said, "I don't think we could have handled as big a problem as this without some assistance. We have our day-to-day responsibilities. It's easy to sit back and say, we're doing the best we can. The support person really gives you more incentive to try, and she broadens your perspective." A teacher said, "We wouldn't have had the extra push that she could give us. We would have tended to put things off."

Kirkwood's approach was always low-key; the school staff never felt she was imposing a process on them or making their decisions. Nevertheless, she was a strong guiding force. Dewitt commented,

> We had no limits placed on us, but I had a feeling that Sharon had certain steps within her. She didn't say, you have to do this or you have to do that. It was a questioning technique to keep you on task.

The principal also said,

> She brainstormed with us and helped us to reexamine our needs She didn't guide us, but she asked some good questions. She was a facilitator. She had a good skill of asking a question that helps to clarify.

Soon after she arrived, Kirkwood met with the three facilitators. In response to Kirkwood's suggestion, Dewitt, Rosen, and O'Keefe categorized the problems that had been identified in the faculty's brain-storming session and sent a memo to the teachers, asking them to list the problem categories in order of importance. The faculty responded that their greatest concern was the lack of pre-reading skills in children entering the school and the need to develop strategies for dealing with the problem.

A second statewide workshop was held in January 1977. This time, the representatives from Bell included Dewitt, Rosen, O'Keefe, Kirkwood, the TEC director, and the district curriculum coordinator. The five-day workshop focused on training, specifically to teach the participants to:

1. Conceptualize their own school as a social system;

2. Analyze the forces which promote and inhibit change;

3. Analyze their own roles as facilitators or field agents;

4. Improve their communication, team-building, and problem-solving skills; and

5. Guide teachers in their own school through problem identification, problem definition, communication with experts outside the local system, solution selection, and the implementation of a school improvement course of action.

The Bell facilitators felt the training was very useful, and they later said they had made a conscious effort to use the suggested techniques.

MAKING DECISIONS

During the two months following the training workshop, Kirkwood met several times with the three facilitators to refine the problem statement. They gathered test data as evidence that the problem existed, and they discussed the program deficiencies that hindered remedial efforts. Principal Dewitt did not involve the faculty as extensively as before, feeling that more meetings would be a burden to the teachers. However, the facilitators, the field agent, and the TEC director did hold one faculty meeting during which they reported on the workshop and answered teachers' questions. In March, Kirkwood wrote a draft of the problem statement, which she later summarized as follows:

> The Bell staff want guidance and guidelines to incorporate a program to help alleviate the identified problems. It was the expressed desire of the faculty that the solution be K-5 and should be a systematic approach to providing for the type of curriculum and instruction needed at Bell. In addition, the teachers requested an individualized approach to staff development, with support sessions throughout the year.
>
> The Bell faculty perceives the main problem being students lacking necessary pre-reading skills when they enter kindergarten. In spite of past efforts on the part of the entire staff, the deficits have not been overcome and as a result many children leave Bell lacking skills in reading. The staff thinks that a continuous progress program which is individualized would take a child from his entry point and move him along at his own rate regardless of grade level. It is also hoped that additional oral language experiences will provide the children with some stimulation and concepts that students need.

The problem statement was reviewed by the facilitators and by several teachers whom they regarded as "key" faculty members. It was then sent to the solution search unit of the project staff. This unit was responsible for cataloging available research-based products in the areas of reading and math and identifying those products which were relevant to the specific problems of each local site.

In late April, Kirkwood received the search unit's report and called a meeting of the facilitators. At this meeting, the facilitators decided they would screen the six options themselves and present the more promising ones to the Bell staff. At another meeting in early May, they narrowed the alternatives down to three programs which they felt best matched Bell's goals and objectives.

One of the three programs, Individually Guided Education (IGE), had not, in fact, been included in the options suggested by the search unit, but was a program that Diane Rosen had seen in use at another school. The other two programs were New Adventures in Learning (NAIL) and the Diagnostic Prescriptive Reading System (DPRS). While DPRS was mainly a source of supplementary materials to be used for diagnosis and prescription in reading, both NAIL and IGE were aimed at staff development and consisted of methods for helping teachers individualize instruction in all curriculum areas.

The three programs were summarized for the Bell faculty in a memo which also recorded what the facilitators felt were the advantages and disadvantages of each one. During the last week in May, each grade level met separately for one hour with Dewitt, Rosen, or Kirkwood to increase the teachers' awareness of the three programs. The grade-level members received information and sample materials; they were instructed to study the information and rank the options. Over the next two weeks, the options were hotly discussed in the lounge, lunchroom, and hallways, as teachers attempted to persuade their colleagues to select one program or another.

The next activity was a faculty meeting. Each grade level's chart of priorities was put on the wall, and each had to defend its priorities on the basis of the whole school's needs. Following this, the teachers divided into four groups, cutting across grade levels, and attempted to reach consensus within each group. Only one of the four groups reached a consensus that day; a conflict was becoming apparent.

The kindergarten teachers wanted to select Project MARC, a developmental reading program which they had partially implemented already and which could be expanded to the first and second grades. Several other teachers were also interested in this possibility, even though it was not one of the three programs that had been presented by the facilitators. According to one respondent, some faculty felt they were being railroaded. They suspected a conflict of interest regarding NAIL, since Diane Rosen had been involved in its development. Also, some teachers felt that IGE was the principal's choice, and thus its selection was inevitable; as one teacher said later, "What would you do if the boss presented a solution?"

Principal Dewitt made no secret of the fact that she favored IGE, especially in comparison with Project MARC. She recalled later, "I didn't want MARC, because it was addressed only to the kindergarten and first grade. IGE is a process, a total framework. The band-aid treatment will be okay after the total treatment has begun."

The teachers decided that another meeting was needed soon, since only one week remained in the school year. During that week, they sought additional information on the three proposals which had the strongest support:

IGE, NAIL, and Project MARC. Two teachers and Sharon Kirkwood visited a local school that was using NAIL. A consultant from Project MARC did an awareness session with the entire faculty. Kirkwood, Dewitt, Rosen and O'Keefe met with staff of the state department of education who were IGE specialists. In addition, Kirkwood set up a meeting between the facilitators and district administrators to determine whether there were any district policies that would serve as barriers to IGE. The assistant superintendent for instruction was very supportive. He said, "If you can make IGE work at Bell, I assure you I will encourage other schools to try it."

At the next faculty meeting, on June 13, the teachers again divided into four groups. After about 40 minutes, they almost had a consensus to implement IGE. The holdouts were the two kindergarten teachers, who wanted to implement MARC. Dewitt felt that, for IGE to be a success, all must agree to commit themselves to at least a trial implementation. She told the faculty they did not have to swallow the whole concept at once; they could look at it in an exploratory fashion the first year. Finally, the last two holdouts voted reluctantly for IGE, and the decision was therefore unanimous.

PLANNING FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Principal Dewitt might have insisted on group solidarity in any decision to select a solution, but she felt it was especially important in the adoption of IGE, or Individually Guided Education. A product of the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning, IGE requires very comprehensive change on the part of the adopting school. It is a total system of education affecting a wide range of educational practices and concerns, namely, school organization and decision making, instructional programming, curriculum materials, teaching approaches, pupil assessment, home-school-community relations, relations with school administrative agencies and teacher education institutions, and school-based research and development.

To help with implementation of IGE, Principal Dewitt felt she needed a full-time assistant principal for curriculum. Thus, she used funds from the school's own operating budget, plus the half-time allotment provided by the district, to make up a full-time position. In the fall of 1977, Marylou Morton joined the staff as assistant principal; Diane Rosen, the half-time resource teacher, was assigned to another school. Morton was an extremely energetic, middle-aged white woman who had worked in the district for a number of years. She had a very pragmatic, "no-nonsense" approach to facilitating change. As she herself described it,

> I think I've been influential in convincing some of the resisters and doubters--those who were afraid of IGE because it involved things that had not been done before. They would say, well, we'd like to do such-and-such, but we can't because of this and that and this. I would say, well, I can take care of this, if you can take care of that and this. Some resisters became doubters and then adopters because of learning more about what IGE was and because of my help in removing the barriers.

One of Marylou Morton's first tasks was to prepare the implementation proposal and plan, which had to be approved by the state project staff in order for the school to receive any implementation funds. She relied very heavily on Sharon Kirkwood for assistance. During the fall of 1977, Morton and Kirkwood met several times per week, usually at the TEC office.

The implementation plan they worked out called for organization of the staff into instructional units, with one member in each unit being designated as the unit leader. The unit leaders, representatives of the administration, and representatives of Title I, special areas, and students would form the Instructional Improvement Committee (IIC), which would meet weekly to discuss decisions related to the instructional program. Time would be built into the regular school day for unit meetings. Team teaching and limited cross-age grouping would replace the existing self-contained classrooms, and consistent reading and math programs would be developed for grades K-5. The staff would review and consider adopting assessment instruments and techniques to help with individualizing student instruction. A coordinated program of home-school-community relations would be developed, beginning with meetings to inform parents about the changes wrought by IGE. Relations with the TEC, the universities, and the state department of education would be continued and expanded. Finally, to ensure that IGE remained a viable, dynamic system, continuous review of new ideas, teaching procedures, and instructional materials would become ongoing activities.

The components of the plan had been discussed during a workshop in the summer of 1977. The participants in the two-day planning session were Dewitt, O'Keefe, Kirkwood, the school media specialist, two other teachers, and an IGE specialist from the state department of education. Those who spoke before this group included the TEC director, the district director of elementary education, the district coordinator of elementary education, the district Title I coordinator, the state TEC coordinator, and two university professors who were hoping to organize an interdisciplinary pre-service program at the school. Implementation strategies were also discussed with the entire faculty during the first teacher workday of the new school year.

The proposal was submitted in December 1977 and approved in February 1978. With this approval came funds for sending teachers to IGE schools and conferences, purchasing IGE-related materials, and hiring consultants for staff development.

INITIAL RESULTS

The Bell staff began implementing some of the IGE concepts even before their proposal was accepted. By the time school started in the fall of 1977, they had already formed themselves into four instructional units, three of which included more than one grade level. Unit A consisted of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, Unit B contained the first grade alone, Unit C contained the second and third grades, and Unit D contained the fourth and fifth grades. Each unit had a unit leader appointed by the principal. The Instructional Improvement Committee (IIC) had also begun meeting. Previously, most planning had been done on a grade-by-grade basis. There had also been a Curriculum Council, but--according to several respondents--the Council had not had much authority and did not meet very often.

The transition to full teacher participation in decision making was not an easy one. According to both Kirkwood and Morton, Principal Dewitt was sometimes reluctant to let go of authority, even though she supported shared decision making as a worthwhile concept. Moreover, not all teachers were eager to participate. Traditionally, as in many other schools, the teachers had felt protected in their own self-contained classrooms. As one said, the prevailing attitude prior to IGE was, "This school has a lot of problems, but I'm doing the best I can in this room."

To provide ongoing support for the new school structure, Kirkwood arranged for consultant services from John Miller, an IGE specialist in one of the state universities. Throughout the 1977-78 school year, Miller made monthly visits to the school. He provided training for the entire faculty and also worked with individual units. During his visits, major decisions were made regarding the school's organization, processes, curriculum, and instruction. In Morton's opinion, Miller was helpful in changing the school from one where decision making was sometimes autocratic to one where decisions were truly shared.

While the most visible changes during the 1977-78 school year were organizational, there were also more subtle changes in educational philosophy and instructional procedures. In her conferences with teachers, Principal Dewitt constantly stressed the importance of setting objectives for individual children and then giving them the individual attention they needed to achieve those objectives. She also visited classrooms every day and dropped in on unit meetings. By the end of the 1977-78 school year, the principal believed there had been a significant change in the teachers' attitudes and behavior.

One aspect of this change was a change in terminology: instead of "grades" they now had "levels." Any pupil in his or her second year of school beyond kindergarten was a "second-level" student; promotion was automatic and did not depend on the pupil's skills. Beyond this, the school had also initiated limited cross-age grouping. For instance, there were some classes for second- and third-level students and some for third- and fourth-level students. In previous years, the school had occasionally resorted to putting more than one grade level in a classroom, but only when class sizes and teacher availability did not match. In those instances, the teacher would still work with each group separately.

Despite some successes, it was clear in May 1978 that IGE was not yet fully established. A teacher said,

> It was kind of hard, or frustrating, at first. A lot of teachers are used to adopting a program with curriculum materials that you can start using right away. IGE is not like that. It's more a system. It's hard for teachers to understand that at first.

The same teacher cited turnover as a problem; the new teachers who arrived in September 1977 had not been involved in the process the previous year. She added, "I don't know whether they were not told in their interviews about it or just decided that it was not their cup of tea, but some feel indifferent or negative towards it."

Marylou Morton also observed that feelings about IGE were mixed. She felt that a number of teachers were using IGE as an excuse to vent their negative feelings about being in the school at all. Morton noted that "resistance is a normal reaction to change." She said that some teachers who had been "resisters" in the early part of the year simply had not had enough information; over the year, however, they had turned into "adopters." Some teachers, according to Morton, still resented the fact that their own choice for a solution had not been adopted.

Despite the ambivalent teacher attitudes, both Dewitt and Morton felt that IGE had already had a number of positive consequences for the school. The principal mentioned more positive feelings among parents about the experiences of their children in the school; more positive feelings among the teachers, especially those who had represented the school off-campus; and a better image of the school among local educators. Morton noted that 5 of the 23 pre-interns who had been assigned to the school during the 1977-78 school year had requested to return to Bell for their internships. She said, "No one had ever requested to come back here before. Bell Elementary was the 'pits.' No one came here unless there was no other place to go." Thus, it was not surprising that, in spite of the mixed feelings that still existed, the entire staff voted in June 1978 to continue with IGE the following year.

THE SECOND YEAR

During the 1978-79 school year, the democratic decision-making structure at the school came into its own. The members of each of the four instructional units held a one-hour meeting every week. At these sessions they discussed the progress and needs of all children in the unit and made plans for instructional programs within the unit. They also discussed goals, evaluation plans, and inservice needs specific to the unit and forwarded their concerns to the IIC through their unit leader. New teachers generally received their orientation to IGE through the unit meetings.

The Instructional Improvement Committee, meeting every other week, directed its attention to problems affecting two or more units as well as to a great number of school-wide issues: behavioral and instructional goals, the use of staff, space, time, equipment, and materials, curriculum improvements, evaluation plans, and inservice training. Among other accomplishments, the IIC decided to adopt the Brigance Inventory of Basic Skills for additional diagnostic testing. The Brigance materials were purchased with project funds, and one-and-a-half days of inservice were provided for each teacher. The IIC also began to develop consistent reading and math programs for grades K-5.

The IIC was becoming quite influential in the school, and most teachers were pleased. They had been used to having one leader, but now they found themselves having "more of a voice." Principal Dewitt downplayed the contrast between the previous and present state of affairs, saying that the school had always had some shared decision making and that she "never wanted to be autocratic." However, she conceded that the processes and structures which the project had introduced certainly made it easier to be democratic. Indeed, several teachers gave examples of the principal going along with an IIC decision even when she was personally opposed to it. And when a new draft of the teachers' handbook was written, the guidelines for the IIC were prominently featured.

The school was moving forward with its implementation plan on other fronts. In the area of home-school-community relations, there was the community schools program, the Grandparents Program (which brought elderly volunteer tutors into the school), and Dewitt's participation in a drive to build a community services center. The effort to group students across ages continued, and there was talk of reorganizing the instructional units.

In one area, however, activities did not go according to plan: Bell's relationships with outside experts began to dwindle. Dr. Miller, the IGE specialist who had met repeatedly with the school staff during the 1977-78 school year, visited only twice in 1978-79. According to Morton, he stopped coming to the school because Dewitt had seemed defensive toward him during his last visits. Sharon Kirkwood, the TEC field agent, had resigned her position in August 1979 to return to graduate school, and the responsibility for relations with Bell was taken over by the TEC director. From then on Morton would talk with the director only twice a month, much less frequently than she had with Kirkwood. Even so, Bell administrators felt that some very worthwhile relationships had been established, both with the TEC and with the universities.

FURTHER PROGRESS

By the 1979-80 school year, many of the early changes associated with IGE had already become routine. Reflecting on current teacher attitudes towards IGE, Dewitt said, "It's hard to differentiate from anything else in the school. It's the organization, the process through which we work." The school's media specialist commented, "I don't know when I last heard IGE talked about....I don't think we even think of it anymore. We've become a school that's been working on Individually Guided Education without talking about it all the time."

Nonetheless, the school had not been standing still. In the fall of 1979 the multiunit structure had been reorganized so that most of the units included an even wider range of student age groups than before. Unit A included pre-kindergarten through first level; Unit B included kindergarten through second level; Unit C included kindergarten through third level; Unit D included second through fifth level; and Unit E included third through fifth level.

There was also much more cross-age grouping than in the first two years of implementation. Many of the homerooms included students in more than one level; but, in addition, there was a great deal more cross-over grouping between homerooms. According to several teachers, this did not bother the students, since they felt themselves to be members of units, rather than classrooms or grade levels.

Marylou Morton felt that planning to meet small group needs was a step towards individualizing instruction. Indeed, the comments of several teachers indicated that individualization was very much on their minds. Marjorie O'Keefe, the original teacher/facilitator, found that

> IGE has helped us to reach the individual child much better, because we plan much better. When we've diagnosed the needs, some of my kids might go to what would be called the kindergarten class, and others might go to the second grade class. Just for the skills they need, an hour or so at a time.

And Doreen Thompson, a middle-aged black teacher who had been with the school for years, said,

> It gives you more freedom to work in ways you feel you can work best with your students. You don't have to stick with the basic text and work with them all the same way. You can suit your style of teaching to the child's style of learning. And we constantly reevaluate. This year we've been changing our groups quite frequently.

One facet of the school's original implementation plan had to be abandoned--the development of consistent reading and math programs for grades K-5. As it turned out, this activity at the school level was superseded in 1979 by a comparable effort at the district level. Specifically, the district began the process of developing an instructional management system which included a scope and sequence for both math and reading. Moreover, the management system had been tied to district-wide adoption of basal texts in reading and math, and a pupil progression plan based on student mastery of 70 percent of the skills deemed appropriate for his or her grade level.

DEGREE OF SUCCESS IN PROBLEM SOLVING

When Bell Elementary initiated its problem-solving effort in September 1976, the school was dealing with some very severe and long-standing problems: a disadvantaged, low-achieving student population, greatly demoralized teachers, high faculty turnover, and a poor image in the community at large. By February 1980 very dramatic changes had been made in every aspect of the school's functioning, yet the school's problems were not yet solved. Most teachers felt that the benefits of IGE would mainly be apparent in the long run. For example, if asked whether IGE had had an effect on pupil performance, they would typically respond, "It should."

Morale for many teachers was greatly improved. According to several staff, the teachers felt more effective in dealing with pupils, had a stronger voice in decision making, and felt more unity, cooperation, and concern for one another. However, faculty turnover was still very high. Four teachers had left at the end of the 1978-79 school year, and as many as ten teachers were expected to leave at the end of the 1979-80 school year. Across the district, Bell was still regarded as an undesirable place to teach.

The school's bad image was difficult to shake. As Principal Dewitt put it, "Some judge the school just by its facilities and the fact that it is 99 percent black." The assistant principal, Marylou Morton, said roughly the same thing: "I don't think enough people have bothered to come and see the program. They have stored connotations and hearsay of the past." She said there were stories in the newspaper, related to the desegregation issue, that told of white parents driving their children to school for the first time, seeing the poor facilities, the neighborhood, and the fact that there were only one or two white children in sight, and then driving right on by.

Desegregation was once again a hot issue, and several rezoning plans were being considered. One would pair Bell with another school, which was predominantly white, and would put the lower grades in this school and the fourth and fifth grades at Bell. A second plan--to change some of the zone boundaries--would mean a very minor change in the racial balance at Bell, and only if white parents complied with the ruling. A third plan would make Bell a magnet school with some kind of special program.

The fact that IGE was not recognized as a special program indicated to Principal Dewitt that the district staff were hardly aware of what was happening at Bell. The assistant superintendent who had reacted so favorably to IGE in 1977 had since then resigned. Dewitt felt that the man who replaced him had very little understanding of IGE: "He doesn't put obstacles in our way, but neither does he know enough to help."

The future of IGE at Bell Elementary depended to a large degree on district-level decisions. At least two of the rezoning plans--pairing Bell with another school or developing it as a magnet program--could mean an end to IGE. Furthermore, there was some conflict between the IGE philosophy and the district's new pupil progression plan. According to Morton, "There's no way some of our fifth-level kids can pass 70 percent of the fifth-grade skills." So far, the district-level staff had been content to leave Bell alone, but with the spotlight of desegregation upon them, that situation was unlikely to continue.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) Of the three perspectives on change (rational, political, social system) which best typifies the leadership of Principal Dewitt? Did it change during the project?

)2) How important was the facilitating team to the change process at Bell Elementary?

(3) Why was the environment external to Bell such a key factor in its improvement effort? What are some good techniques for identifying environmental forces and actors that may affect school change?

(4) "I think it's ludicrous when the principal comes to us for advice on a school problem. We all know that she will do what she wants in the end regardless of what we suggest. Anyway, making the hard decisions is her job, not ours." Suppose a teacher had made this statement about Principal Dewitt. How accurate is it? If you were the principal and overhead this remark, what would you do?

(5) To implement IGE, schools must thoroughly restructure grades and instructional roles. To what extent does such restructuring help or hinder long-term institutionalization of an innovation?

CHAPTER 4

PARKER VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Anna L. Hyer

For many years, the Parker Valley school system appeared to be a paradise without snakes. Its programs were innovative, the school climate was excellent, and the community was active and supportive. The teachers were well qualified and well paid; furthermore, relations between the teachers' association and the school board were very good. When problems did arise, the teachers were quick to respond: bypassing the administration, they organized an inservice project that brought experts into Parker Valley to advise the troubled teachers. As local funds ran out, the organizers obtained the backing of a national program. They were thus able to continue the project, although they generally disobeyed the national program's guidelines. By the time federal funding ran out, the principle of teacher control of inservice was firmly lodged in Parker Valley.

Located in a western state just 35 miles from a metropolitan area, Parker Valley had nevertheless remained rural in nature, due to the intervening mountain ranges and limited geographic access. Until the late 1950s, only one road led to the valley. Although a freeway was then opened, the residents incorporated and passed strict ordinances controlling development. With some exceptions, the area's 5,000 residents were white, affluent, and highly educated. Homes ranged in price from $100,000 to $150,000, and some of the larger estates were priced much higher, when they could be bought at all.

The community supported and was actively interested in its schools. One principal said her school logged as many as 600 parent volunteer hours in a month's time. Nevertheless, 12 percent of the area's elementary age children were enrolled in private schools, reflecting the wealth of the community and family tradition. In 1977 about 680 students were enrolled in the public schools.

The 51 certified staff, of whom all but a few were white females, were well qualified and rather well paid. The average classroom salary was about $2,000 above the state average. Over 72 percent of the teachers had two or more years of postgraduate training, and 37 percent of those had acquired master's degrees. Turnover was quite low; the typical teacher had been employed by the district more than 12 years.

One hundred percent of Parker Valley's teachers belonged to the local teachers' association, a closely knit and highly professional group that was not easily influenced by the administration. The association maintained a good image with the board and the community, having voluntarily turned down salary increases in favor of a token bonus when funds were low.

The district's most influential faculty member, by far, was Jane Barrows, the school psychologist. A member of the teachers' association, she saw her role more as a therapist than as an administrator of tests, and she spent as much time with teachers as with students. A good working relationship also existed between the teachers and the two principals. Indeed, the principals considered themselves, and acted, more like teachers than administrators.

COPING WITH TROUBLES

In the mid-1970s Parker Valley began to experience some problems. For several years, the district's enrollment had been declining by about 30 students per year. Since the district was small, the slight decline was monetarily significant, though it did not cause teacher dismissals. Attrition and a liberal leave policy prevented overstaffing, and several teachers took early retirement.

Then, in 1975, the district decided to close the oldest of the three schools, an historic landmark which was unfortunately located on the trace lines of a geologic fault. Many of the community residents were angry with the school board's decision. Some felt they had not been adequately consulted, others that the children were as safe in the school as at home; moreover, the school that was closed was the only one in the district with a gymnasium. Due partly to the involuntary transfers and also to the lack of an activity center at the remaining schools, student attitudes began deteriorating. There was an increase in vandalism, disrespect, profanity, and other problems, though these were attributed to just a few students.

These occurrences and the uncertain financial situation were mildly distressing to the teachers. They felt that the district's inservice education activities should be directed toward helping them to deal with the changing situations in their classrooms and in the school community. Instead, the inservice was organized by the superintendent and focused on topics which teachers felt were irrelevant to their own concerns. As one teacher commented,

> It was planned by the district for teachers. It was one of the most frustrating things that we had been going through. This was during the tenure of three superintendents. Administrative problems were discussed, not teacher problems. These administrative problems could usually have been handled through written communication. One year was spent in planning new buildings that were never built.

Another teacher said, "Inservice was organized by the superintendent, and it was from her perspective, not from the teacher's perspective."

Then, in the summer of 1976, the district was left without a superintendent. Following the example of earlier superintendents, who seemed to regard Parker Valley as a steppingstone to positions in larger districts, the superintendent had resigned after just one year. Although a search committee was formed, a new superintendent was not hired until mid-summer 1978. In the meantime, the board appointed a former teacher, who was currently enrolled in a doctoral program, as administrative intern. She handled the district's "paperwork," including grantsmanship, while other administrative tasks were assumed by the two principals and the school psychologist.

Jane Barrows, the school psychologist, took this opportunity to develop a voluntary inservice program which she hoped would better meet the needs and interests of the teachers. It ran for 11 weeks during the 1976-77 school year and was focused on guidance strategies for the classroom teacher. Barrows led some sessions and brought in outside consultants for the rest. The district's two principals participated on an equal basis with the teachers. At the end of the year, enthusiasm for repeating the course was high, and "teacher stress" had emerged as the topic of greatest interest for the coming year.

The inservice activities then hit a snag: the funds which had paid for inservice education were cut from the 1977-78 school district budget. Hoping to salvage the program, Eileen Brannigan, the administrative intern, began casting about for another source of funding. In the late summer of 1977 she called the state teachers' association to ask for help or suggestions. Her contact then told her of a national project to help teachers identify and adopt inservice products such as films, training packages, and workshop materials. Along with toll-free telephone access to a national information base, the schools participating in the project were to be given monetary support for planning specific inservice activities and purchasing relevant products. Technical assistance in dealing with the project's systems and procedures would be provided by a state-based "facilitator," hereafter referred to as the field agent.* Fortunately, the project was looking for new sites, and Parker Valley was invited to participate.

JOINING THE PROJECT

In September 1977 the state-based field agent came to Parker Valley to meet with Jane Barrows, the school psychologist; Eileen Brannigan, the administrative intern; and Verna Rudden, the president of the local teachers' association. Rudden accepted the invitation to join the project, subject to membership ratification. Before the end of the month, the decision had been ratified by the association's members and had also been endorsed by the two principals and the school board.

Project guidelines specified that the inservice activities be planned by a committee of teachers and administrators. With the full support of the two principals, however, the project in Harper Valley was organized by, and belonged to, the local teachers' association. Members of the inservice committee were selected by Barrows and Brannigan, and included three members of the teachers' association, in addition to themselves. Because of her key role in the previous year's inservice activities, Barrows quite naturally became the project leader. All appointments were later ratified by the teachers' association.

Very early in 1978 an acting superintendent (who was not a candidate for the permanent position) was appointed as an advisor to the school board. Feeling that the inservice project should be under district control, he attempted to intervene. However, the teachers carried out their plans without altering them in any way to meet the desires of the newly arrived and temporary superintendent.

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*Field agents in this project were located on the staffs of state education associations and state departments of education, and devoted only a small percentage of their time to the field agent role.

Before the Parker Valley site was fully organized, the state field agent held his first training meeting for representatives of each site in the state. No one from Parker Valley attended. However, no harm was done, since the field agent repeated the majority of the training on site. During the 1977-78 school year, he visited Parker Valley seven times, attending several committee meetings and two workshop sessions. He also maintained contact by telephone. At the end of the year, however, Barrows assessed his role as primarily dealing with "mechanics" and said that the site had "pretty much been flying on its own."

In early October 1977 the five-member inservice education committee met with the field agent for an hour's orientation and a discussion of plans for problem identification. Their first task was to conduct a formal needs assessment, that is, a survey of teacher needs for inservice. They developed a survey questionnaire, which was distributed to all teachers in October. Eighty-seven percent of the teachers responded. The committee then met to analyze the results. By mid-January they had categorized the teachers' wide-ranging responses into five major areas:

1. Parent communication and relations
2. Teacher self-esteem
3. Teacher/student relationships
4. Ways of relaxing and coping with stress
5. Creating educational partnerships and making use of local teacher talent

For most sites in the national inservice project, searching for and selecting inservice materials would have been the next step, but the teachers in Parker Valley were reluctant to change the model which had worked so well for them the previous year. Therefore, instead of conducting a search for materials, they moved on to program planning, which for them meant a search for consultants and resource personnel.

LINING UP SPEAKERS

After discussion with the state field agent, the teachers determined that they could spend about $440 of project funds to secure three or four outside consultants; staff from within the district would lead other sessions at no cost. The committee decided that outside consultants could best deal with three areas: the medical model of stress, mainstreaming of special needs children (a subtopic under teacher/student relationships), and teacher self-esteem.

The suggestions for potential consultants in each topic area came from the teaching staff. Some were the teachers' former professors, some had been written up in newspaper articles, and others had conducted workshops that received favorable comment from teachers who attended. The inservice committee considered the suggestions and decided on four speakers. Dr. Helen McNichols, a medical psychologist from a major university medical center, would speak on the medical model of stress and techniques for relaxation. Dr. Herbert Underhill, a professor in the department of educational psychology at one of the state universities, would discuss mainstreaming of children with special needs. Two consultants would explore teacher self-esteem: Dr. Robert Simmons, a consultant from the county office of education, and Dr. Hansen Cummings, a psychologist. Resources from within the district would provide leadership for sessions on parent communication and making use of local teacher talent.

Jane Barrows made the necessary arrangements. She informed the consultants that the committee did not want a series of didactic lectures, but preferred a workshop approach, with as much teacher participation as possible. The consultants were expected to come armed with specific practical ideas that teachers could use in their classrooms. When possible, the workshops should focus on problems arising from the teachers' own experiences.

After the consultants were retained, the committee developed the course calendar. To assure teacher control over the activity, as well as its voluntary nature, they decided to hold the inservice classes after school hours. Eventually, they decided on an 11-week course, meeting for two hours every Thursday evening. They left a couple of meetings free at the end of the course calendar because, as Barrows said, "Sometimes the teachers want more of a thing after they get into it." Since some teachers wanted college credit for the course, Barrows made the appropriate arrangements with a state university. However, teachers could also choose to take the course without getting credit.

Although they had moved ahead with program planning, the leaders of the Parker Valley inservice project had not entirely forgotten their promise to use the national project's data bank on inservice products. In January 1978 the state field agent received a call from a teacher on the inservice committee. She reported to him the progress that had been made in drawing up the course calendar, but also said there was room at the end of the course for using inservice products. The field agent invited her to attend a statewide training session two weeks later, where she would be told how to use the project's 800 number for obtaining product descriptions from the project's information specialists. She did attend the training session, but did not make her first call to the toll-free number until April, after the course was already half-completed. At this time, she requested products related to discipline, parent involvement, mainstreaming, developing student responsibility, and reality therapy. The project's information specialists then sent 36 product descriptions. There is no evidence that the product descriptions were used in any way during the 1977-78 school year. However, at the end of the year, the leaders of the Parker Valley inservice project indicated that some of the products might be ordered for the following year.

A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM

The sessions began on schedule in February 1978 and were very well attended. About 90 percent of the 27 teachers who had volunteered for the sessions attended every one, while other teachers attended those sessions that specifically interested them.

In an end-of-the-year evaluation, the teachers gave the program very high ratings. According to Verna Rudden, the association president, the teachers' enthusiasm could be attributed to the fact that teachers had selected, designed, and operated the "whole show"--Jane Barrows had facilitated what the teachers wanted, rather than prescribing what she or the inservice committee felt was best for them. The resulting emphasis on stress reduction and self-esteem might startle traditionalists, but, as Barrows pointed out, "If teachers feel and act better, it's better for kids."

Another cause for teacher satisfaction was the flexibility of the course outline. Participants were free to suggest working on a topic longer than planned. They could also suggest substitutions if a more vital topic appeared on the horizon. For example, one of the meetings that had been scheduled as a session on self-esteem was given over to a discussion of proposed legislation to limit state spending and the effect this could have on public schools.

Finally, the teachers enjoyed the diverse mixture of presentational techniques, question-and-answer periods, role play, and free-flowing group dynamics activities. One teacher summed up these views and then added, "Perhaps the most notable result was the awareness of the need for collegial support and the rapport obtained as staff members of varying grades and subject areas solved problems together." With another successful year behind them- The project leaders were pleased to learn in May 1978 that they had been selected for a second year of funding.

TROUBLE IN PARADISE

Parker Valley's teachers soon had much else to think about. The passage of legislation to limit state spending hit the schools in Parker Valley particularly hard. Budget cuts averaged 15 percent in the district for the 1978-79 school year. Programs were not dropped, although extra effort was made to fund programs from outside sources. Two non-tenured teachers were dismissed, as were all part-time teachers and teacher aides. Also lost were specialized personnel: an LD teacher and a librarian. Janitorial and secretarial services were reduced, and all transportation was cut, even though some students lived as many as 20 miles from school. The result, a bare-bones staff and service level, meant a complete reshuffling of schedules and increased demands on the time of the remaining teachers.

The inservice committee did not survive these cuts unscathed. One of its members was dismissed, and two others decided they no longer had the time to spend on committee activities. Jane Barrows was placed on leave from her psychologist position in order to work on a project with outside funding. However, she continued to coordinate the district's special education and staff development activities. Because of her changed assignment, she was no longer eligible for membership in the teachers' association. Nevertheless, the teachers' association asked her to continue as the inservice project coordinator. Three teachers who had been involved in the previous year's inservice course stepped forward to fill the gaps in the committee. They felt that, despite the increased pressure on teacher time, teachers would still turn out for a course that interested them.

In the midst of this storm, a new superintendent came aboard and began tightening the chain of command. She made a number of changes, mostly in operational procedures, without consulting the teachers. For example, she changed the length of the school day, modified the parent conferencing procedures, and replaced the team-taught kindergartens with individually-taught kindergartens meeting at the same time. In keeping with her belief in a line-staff type of operation, she decreed that the teachers' association could no longer approach the school board directly. She also expressed an interest in the inservice project, but whenever she asked how the school district could get more involved, the subject was quickly changed. Control of the project was carefully guarded by the teachers' association and Barrows. To make this quite clear, the inservice committee decided that no work for the inservice project should be done during school hours. They therefore authorized the expenditure of project funds to cover a stipend for Barrows, as well as payment for secretarial time spent in typing after hours. As before, participation would be voluntary, and the classes would be held after school.

THE COMMITTEE DECIDES

In August 1978 the five committee members attended a statewide training conference conducted by representatives of the national project office. Topics included local planning and the use of project resource personnel. The Parker Valley contingent did not find the training conference entirely useful, and it had little effect on the direction of the project at Parker Valley. Project planning proceeded much as it had in the previous year, with one important difference: the inservice committee decided that a new needs assessment was not required. They had done some informal canvassing of teachers to obtain ideas, and they also had the previous year's evaluation results, which included suggestions for the upcoming school year. Besides, the committee members felt they were representative of Parker Valley's teachers.

Based on the data they had in hand, the committee decided that the program would focus on Current Trends and Issues in Education. Within the general topic area, they identified four potential areas of concern:

1. The state of education, changes that were taking place, ways to prepare for and endure those changes, and their likely effects on students;
2. Current trends in educational research;
3. Ways to secure and effectively use the services of student teachers; and
4. Effective modes of assertive discipline.

One member explained the choices this way,

> With the legislation to cut state spending, a new county superintendent, and a new superintendent of schools, and all the kinds of changes that have occurred, we felt we almost had to do something that involved talking about where teachers are and where they are going with public education. We had the feeling that this was the kind of thing uppermost in people's minds at this point.

Another teacher said, "More teachers are interested in inservice if the topics for discussion are broadly based, that is, not too directly related to classroom materials."

The direction for the second year program came as somewhat of a surprise for national project representatives, who had been told the previous spring that the likely focus for the second year would be assertive discipline. Barrows offered this explanation for the apparent shift in emphasis:

> The teachers on the committee this year were, as individuals, really into how to influence the process of what happens to us in education. I don't know that the total teaching group was that involved. The inservice committee may not have reflected the total teaching group this year as well as it did last year.

Aside from the method for choosing a focus, the planning process was much the same as the previous year's. The committee selected five consultants, including the dean of the school of education at a prestigious university, a professor of education from the same university, a member of the state board of education, the president of the state teachers' association, and the county superintendent of schools. In addition, the district's two principals were asked to make a presentation on assertive discipline, based on their experience in a weekend assertive discipline workshop.

For a change of pace, and perhaps as a concession to the national project objectives, the inservice committee decided to open the series with a film. A member of the committee called the project's toll-free number in October 1978 and specified "teacher stress" as the site's problem. Eight product descriptions were sent to the site and were added to the 36 that had been received the previous April. The committee was most interested in previewing the film, An Eye for Change, from The Heart of Teaching series. This film, they said,

> was on coping with change that comes from the administration. We were confronting, at the beginning of the school year, a lot of change that wasn't coming from any rational basis, from any needs assessment or anything. There was just a lot of change going on, and that was why we wanted to look at that particular film.

The film was previewed at a committee meeting in November; but, when the film started, everyone gasped. Jane Barrows later explained why the film was rejected: "It was a fluke, because the moderator in the film could have been a twin for our superintendent! It was just one of those things. It wasn't the material that was in it, but we knew what would happen if we showed that film."

The committee decided that none of the other product descriptions was pertinent. However, the school district had received a flyer advertising another film that was not in the project's data base. It was Assertive Discipline in the Classroom, by Lee Canter. Very positive reports about the film had also reached Parker Valley from other school districts. The committee previewed the film and accepted it for use in the inservice program.

GOOD, BUT NOT GREAT

Eleven workshop sessions were held between January and March 1979. Thirty-two of the 40 teachers in the district enrolled in the course, 27 of them for credit. The workshops were again well attended.

During the last class meeting, several class members discussed their feelings about the course. Most agreed that the course had had no direct effect on their classroom teaching, with the exception of the sessions dealing with assertive discipline. More importantly, however, the course had provided them a place where they could discuss and share problems, and receive mutual support at a time when it was greatly needed. As one principal said, "The course was one of the few tendons holding the staff together just now." Still, the consensus was that the workshops had not been as successful as the previous year's program. Three major reasons were given for this: the topics chosen, the consultants, and the school climate.

The teachers had enjoyed talking with people involved in various aspects of education, but some also felt that the year's topics were depressing. They would have preferred less emphasis on the legislative and financial aspects of education and more emphasis on the teacher as a person. In hindsight, Barrows felt that the committee should have circulated the potential topics and asked for comments from the teachers.

A second problem was that, on the whole, the course consultants were less satisfactory than the ones for the previous year. They had been chosen because they were people who were in positions to be knowledgeable about the topics assigned to them. Moreover, the teachers had provided each consultant with a list of questions prior to the meetings. Even so, a few of the consultants came unprepared; one failed to show on the appointed date and had to be rescheduled. There were also more lectures and fewer discussions and role-play activities than in the previous year.

The impinging external events also affected the teachers' attitudes. Supplies were low, teacher aides and some specialists were gone, teaching assignments had been changed, and, toward the end of the year, nearly half of the 40 teachers as well as the two principals received notice of possible dismissal. How many of those would actually be dismissed depended upon action by the state's governor to bail out the school districts. In the meantime, there was uncertainty not only among the teachers who had received dismissal notices, but also among the other teachers, whose assignments the coming year would be affected by the number and nature of the dismissals.

To cap the district's problems, about twice as many parents as before were requesting transfers of their children to private schools. One principal stated, "There has been a strange and unexpected effect on the communities we serve. Parents have the feeling that we took away the money but we are going to provide even more service than before." Relations with the new superintendent had gone from bad to worse. Her authoritarian leadership style had antagonized the teachers and many community members, and the school board was considering a move to buy up the remaining two years of her contract.

In the midst of this gloom, there were nevertheless several positive side effects of the inservice activities. First, the school board accepted a request from the teachers' association for nine paid inservice days: three to be teacher work-days, three to be planned by teachers at the building level, and three to be planned by administrators. Some felt that board approval of this plan was influenced by the success of the inservice activities that had been conducted on the teachers' own time. Another side effect was a change in the local teachers' association bylaws to create an association task force on professional development; the inservice committee was made a subcommittee of this group. Commenting on the importance of this development, one committee member said, "Now that it is in the bylaws, it will continue whether or not any of us are around." Finally, the teachers had received widespread recognition for their innovative inservice program. They had been asked to make presentations on the program to at least two important conventions, and stories of the program had been carried in the local newspapers. Thus, the project activities helped to build the teachers' professional status at a time when it had been undermined in the public image.

A CLOUDY FUTURE

As the school year ended, it was uncertain how recent events would affect the future of the Parker Valley inservice program. On the one hand, the inservice activities were enthusiastically supported not only by the teachers but also by the principals, both of whom expected the program to continue. On the other hand, because the national project was ending, there would no longer be an outside source of funding for the program. Furthermore, of the five current members of the inservice committee, four had received notice of possible dismissal, and one of these was Jane Barrows. Commenting on the effect Barrows' departure might have on the inservice program, one principal said, "If she left, the program would falter but could go on. There are other teachers in the district who are good at organization, but she has the added asset of also being good at facilitation."

The inservice committee was optimistic about the prospects for continuing the program without project funds. Towards the end of the school year, they were considering such ideas as operating the program through the university; they were also reassessing the advantages and disadvantages of sponsorship by the school district. This latter step would not be taken lightly, since the teachers felt association control over the inservice program was especially valuable. Because they were able to control attendance, the sessions had been occasions for the teachers (and principals) to meet and air their views freely. Also, because the activities were sponsored by the association, the teachers had felt comfortable focusing on topics related to their own personal growth, rather than topics that were more classroom-related.

One teacher stated, "Teachers in our district have become increasingly aware through this inservice program of the power they wield to tailor the kind of program they want for inservice." Even if future activities were to be sponsored by the district, the philosophy of building inservice on the collectively determined needs of teachers seemed firmly established.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) Although the project at Parker Valley was controlled by the teachers, the school psychologist was far more influential than the district superintendent or any principal. Did the absence of strong administrative leadership have any significant consequences for the project?

(2) At the end of the case, the Parker Valley project faced a "cloudy future." Although principals and teachers enthusiastically supported the inservice activities, the national project was ending, district money was tight, and most of the inservice committee had received notice of possible dismissal. Suppose you were hired as a consultant to advise the district on how to sustain inservice activities despite these difficulties. What would you recommend?

(3) The first year's inservice program focused on the diffuse and highly ambitious goal of reducing "teacher stress." What are the advantages and limitations of avoiding greater specificity in project goals?

(4) Change managers must give careful attention to determining whether an organization is ready for change. At Parker Valley, the national inservice project was embraced as an opportunity to continue a previously established inservice program rather than to clarify and solve a new problem. Should the national project have compelled Parker Valley to reconsider its inservice problems and program? Why?

(5) At Parker Valley, a collaborative relationship existed among the teachers in project decision making. Based on this case, what are the costs and benefits of group decision making? When should it not be used?

CHAPTER 5

BAYFIELD SCHOOL

Allen G. Smith

The Bayfield School was in serious need of a career education program. The economy of the rural area which it served was not healthy, unemployment was high, and the average annual income for families was only $7,000. Though there were few available jobs, most graduates of the Bayfield School remained in the area, finding jobs where they could--in the mining, lumber, or construction trades--or following their parents into farming. To bring unemployment down, the children of the Bayfield community would have to be encouraged to consider other types of employment outside the area and would also need training in how to make themselves employable.

In the late 1970s, the Bayfield School directed its attention to these needs, implementing a career exploration program at the junior high level and an employability skills class at the high school level. If the school's curriculum was successfully changed, its decision-making structure was not. As will be seen, the entire career education effort bore the individual stamp of Bayfield's principal.

Located in a North Central state, Bayfield was inhabited largely by farmers of Scandinavian descent. There were no major population centers. Instead, Bayfield's 1400 adults and 800 children were dispersed across the 400-square-mile district. The area was isolated and largely undeveloped, and the most visible branch of the state government was the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The distaste of Bayfield's people for interference by outsiders, as well as their distrust of the state government and bureaucracy, was exemplified by the bumper sticker often seen on cars and pick-up trucks: "The Lord giveth and the DNR taketh away."

Bayfield School was built in 1966 after three smaller districts consolidated. The only school in the district, it had a total enrollment (K-12) of 600. One-fifth of the students were Native American; the rest, Caucasian. Class size was large (usually 30 to 40 students) and staff size small: 28 teachers, one counselor, two principals (one each for the elementary and secondary schools), and the superintendent.

The superintendent, who came to the district early in 1977, soon made his presence felt. At his suggestion, plans were made to convert the junior high school program, with classes segregated by age, to a middle school, with students grouped by ability level. However, he took little part in the career education project. Instead, the key local figure was Greg Babel, the secondary school principal.

THE POWER IN BAYFIELD

Babel had been principal since 1968. Since Bayfield was such a small school, his role was multifaceted: he was responsible for discipline, curriculum, staff training, career and vocational education, and until 1978, counseling. Babel was at the center of authority and communication in his school. All teachers reported to him and little went on without his knowledge.

Babel freely admitted that his background--he had served in the military and had operated his own business--influenced his management style. Day-to-day decisions he simply made unilaterally. Major decisions in such a small school required consensus, since opposition by even one teacher could cripple a policy change. However, since he and the new superintendent were careful to maintain a united front in public even when they privately disagreed on a matter, it was fairly easy, in Babel's words, for them to "brainwash" resisters into acceptance.

The educational approach in Bayfield was conservative, with an emphasis on basic skills. Until the middle school was introduced, there had been no changes in curriculum in 10 years. The value of this strictly academic approach did not go unquestioned in an area where so few graduates went on to higher education. Parents wanted their children to be informed of the variety of career opportunities available in the world at large; still, they were reluctant to pressure the teachers, whom they viewed as the experts in education. Moreover, although the state legislature had passed a Career Education Act in 1974, which encouraged school districts to stress career education, no funds had been voted to help the districts do so.

Nevertheless, some changes did occur after the passage of the Career Education Act. A core group of staff formed to write the career education plan required by the legislation. The intermediate school district of which Bayfield was a part provided some help in the form of workshops, and a very successful auto mechanics class was begun at the school.

Further progress was halted in 1976, when the school suffered a severe budgetary crisis. Soon after the negotiation of a contract with the teachers and the purchase of new buses, the district found itself $80,000 in the red. Justifiably or not, the school board blamed the superintendent and ousted him. To cope with the deficit, the district went from a six-period day to seven so fewer teachers could cover more classes. At the same time the district reduced its purchases of supplies to a minimum, made cuts in the cooking and custodial staff, and in March 1977 asked the voters to approve a 5 1/2 mill increase to cover the remainder of the deficit. The vote failed and the district laid off 10 of the 28 teachers. The millage finally passed in August, but by then four of the teachers had found jobs; the district consequently had to hire four new teachers.

With teachers overworked, morale low, and local funds unavailable, it is easy to see why the career education effort in Bayfield came to a standstill in 1976. Nevertheless, the new superintendent and Principal Babel supported the idea, and a needs assessment conducted in the district that year showed that parents felt career education to be a top priority. The situation called for a deus ex machina; his name was Duane Johnson, and he worked for the intermediate school district to which Bayfield belonged.

THE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Along with six other school districts, Bayfield was served by the Dillon-Sokol Intermediate School District (ISD). The ISD acted as an intermediary between these districts and the state department of education. It offered general administrative services, such as assistance with evaluations and reports, and helped the districts provide equal opportunities to handicapped students. But the ISD's most important activity was in the area of vocational education.

Duane Johnson was the ISD's director of vocational education. Under him served 25 professionals, the great bulk of the ISD's staff. Fourteen were instructors for the half-day vocational courses offered either in the schools or in a "satellite center" serving a number of the smaller districts. (Half of Bayfield's 11th and 12th graders spent their afternoons at this center.) The ISD also offered a placement service, run by Bob Falter, a member of Johnson's staff. Johnson and Falter took pride in the 98 percent placement rate they had achieved.

There was yet another organization in the educational hierarchy. The Dillon-Sokol ISD, as well as the ISD in neighboring Menoway County, constituted the Tri-County Career Education Planning District (CEPD). The CEPD was a shadowy entity; it had no organizational structure of its own, apart from a council charged with planning the future of career education within the CEPD. Duane Johnson served as the CEPD's vocational-technical specialist, though within the Dillon-Sokol ISD this role was indistinguishable from his role as the ISD's director of vocational education.

Johnson had a third title, that of CEPD coordinator. As such, he was technically responsible for helping schools implement the Career Education Act. Beyond helping districts prepare annual career education plans, Johnson did little in his role as CEPD coordinator, since his vocational activities kept him busy.

Johnson's previous experience had been with the state department of education, with the state university (where he trained teachers in vocational education), and with various federal programs, such as Job Corps. Johnson drew on his familiarity with the wider educational world in his work with the ISD; when he learned about a local district's problems or needs, he would inform the superintendent or principal about any available knowledge or resources.

Rather than act as a stimulus himself, Johnson felt he should facilitate initiatives taken locally. This approach made good sense, since ISDs had no direct authority over local districts. In this respect they resembled businesses more than governmental agencies; they prospered by "selling" their services to local schools. By attentively serving his clientele, Johnson had built the ISD into a veritable conglomerate.

THE CAREER EDUCATION PROJECT

In 1976 the state department of education initiated a project to help schools locate and adopt career education programs and materials. Duane Johnson, as CEPD coordinator, was designated as the field agent for his area. One of the requirements was that participating districts conduct a needs assessment. Johnson thought of Bayfield, which had recently completed one, and called Greg Babel. After describing the project, Johnson invited Babel to apply for funding; the application was subsequently accepted.

One of the purposes of the project was to introduce a new problem-solving and decision-making process in the schools. Johnson knew this, but he saw little chance that he could do more than react to local requests for assistance, especially considering his many commitments, the distance between his office and Bayfield, and his established methods of operation. Thus he never stressed the process goal in his dealings with Babel.

For their part, those in Bayfield welcomed the project as an opportunity to implement parts of the district's career education plan. In view of the district's financial crisis, outside funding was the only hope Bayfield had of introducing career education to the school in 1977. The problem-solving steps required by the department of education seemed quite irrelevant to this goal, and were seen locally as distracting "hoops" through which they must jump. It was in this spirit that the project developed in Bayfield.

Principal Babel took command of the change effort in Bayfield. Project guidelines called for the formation of a site team representing the faculty, the administration, and the community. A core group of staff had been formed in 1975 to comply with the requirements of the Career Education Act. To comply with the new project's guidelines, this group was expanded to include four teachers (including the auto mechanics teacher), four parents, and the district's three administrators. Whether the group ever met is uncertain; by the fall of 1977 it was almost forgotten. Instead, all planning for the project was carried out by Greg Babel, who kept the superintendent generally informed, together with the teachers whose classes would be directly affected. These teachers formed the second "site team," which met only a few times to receive information from the principal and to approve his decisions.

THE PRINCIPAL IDENTIFIES THE PROBLEMS

As noted, Bayfield had conducted a needs assessment in 1976. The survey instrument was developed with the advice of the ISD and the department of education, field tested, and following publicity in the local media, administered to all parents, students, and teachers.

Despite the care with which the survey was conducted, it was viewed with skepticism by many, including the new superintendent and the principal. Both felt that formal surveys were not needed in a district the size of Bayfield, where the population had frequent face-to-face contact both socially and professionally with local educators. They doubted whether many of the respondents to the survey really understood what the survey was asking. According to Babel, parents in the district tended to see the school as the expert. Therefore, if things were already being done in the school, the parents thought that the school must be doing them well. If something was not being done, then there must be a great need for it. The fact that one of the questions concerned art classes, and that the school did not offer art, thus accounted for the parents' rating art as the district's greatest need; career education was a close second.

Babel maintained that the district's needs could be identified much more readily and accurately simply by talking to people, sensing their concerns, and then verifying these perceptions by talking with others. This, said Babel, is what he did in the spring of 1977, soon after Bayfield's application was accepted. As a result of these conversations, he decided that Bayfield's project would have two foci:

1. Development of a seminar for high school seniors that would teach them how to go out into the world of work. This course should include instruction in preparing job applications, writing resumes and going through interviews.

2. Development of a program in career exploration for junior high school students that would review career opportunities and help students identify high school courses that would be most beneficial to them in view of their particular career aspirations.

Babel said these foci were responsive to one of the most immediate needs in the district--making children aware of opportunities available in the world of work and helping them prepare for them. This preparation requires not only grounding in the skills demanded by the occupation, but also the skills needed to get hired in the first place. Once he had identified these foci and cleared them with the new superintendent, he went to the teachers who would be affected. These foci were discussed in a staff meeting--in effect, the first team meeting--and consensus was reached on them.

During interviews held some time after these decisions were made, the teachers expressed general agreement with the foci selected. However, teachers talked as though they had had little voice in the decision. They described what they were going to be doing in RDU much as a well-informed citizen describes policy decisions that have been made by a city council; they knew what was going to happen, they generally agreed with it, and they generally accepted the fact that such decisions were appropriately made by someone besides themselves.

CHOOSING TWO SOLUTIONS

Because Bayfield elected to address two different problem areas, there were two distinct processes for choosing solutions. Both illustrated the basic decision-making practices in Bayfield. Soon after Babel decided on the project's goals, Duane Johnson received a release from the state office of vocational education saying that Cliff Jump at the state university was developing an employability skills course with a grant from the state. Since Johnson knew Jump personally, he contacted him and asked that Dillon-Sokol ISD be involved in the early stages of the product's field testing. Jump agreed, and Johnson arranged a workshop for the entire ISD to be held May 2, 1977.

When Johnson informed him of the coming workshop, Babel was naturally interested and sent one high school English teacher as his representative. That teacher returned from the workshop enthusiastic about the product and anxious to try it with Bayfield's seniors. As it happened, there was a meeting of all ISD principals that night, and Jump was on the agenda. Babel was also impressed by Jump's presentation and decided at that time to implement the course as part of Bayfield's project.

Along with the teacher who had attended Jump's workshop, Babel described the employability skills course to the rest of the teachers. No one objected to pursuing it. The task of selling was simplified considerably by the fact that only one teacher (the one who had attended the workshop) would be involved in teaching the course, and he was already convinced.

Although it took longer, the search for a junior high career exploration product was hardly more complex than the one just described. In the fall of 1977 Greg Babel telephoned Duane Johnson to find out what products were available in career exploration for junior high students. Aware that the state project staff were in the process of preparing fact sheets on career education products, Johnson called them in October and said he needed information on products in the area of career exploration. Since the fact sheets were not yet ready, the staff sent him about 50 pages from various catalogues documenting a number of products for career exploration.

When Johnson gave this information to Babel, the principal responded by saying: "I can't read through all that, Duane. Don't you know about any products?" Johnson said he did know of one from the Applachian Educational Laboratory that had been piloted with some success in another school district. This same product, he added, had been used with freshmen at nearby Northern University. According to what he had heard, the students had responded enthusiastically, saying: "Why didn't we have this long ago!"

With that, Babel asked Johnson to order some information on the product. When it came he reviewed it along with Carl Frank, the junior high English teacher whom Babel wanted to teach the course. They liked what they saw, and after discussing it at a staff meeting early in November decided to order the product.

As before, no formal criteria were established to guide the selection process. In retrospect, Babel said that the primary criteria were that the product gave junior high students exposure to a variety of career alternatives; it was aimed for the right grade levels; and, most important of all, Duane Johnson knew someone who had used the product successfully.

Unlike the employability skills product, some other products were considered at least superficially before a decision was made. Babel said that he had been at conferences where other products were on display, but in his judgment they were all more complicated, required more inservice, or were aimed at the wrong grade levels. No one, aside from Babel, reviewed these other products.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

The budget crisis in the summer of 1977 did not delay the employability skills course, even though the 10 teachers laid off included the teacher who was to teach the course that fall. The millage subsequently passed in

August, after the teacher had found another job. By coincidence, Babel's nephew, Paul Bergen, was in town after spending six months in Mexico. He was hired in August to replace the departed teacher, with the understanding that he would teach the new course in employability skills. Less than a week after being hired, and new to teaching, Bergen was sent to a workshop to be trained in the new product.

As taught by Paul Bergen, the employability skills course ran an entire semester with a 45-minute class daily. Bergen began the semester with a pretest to see how much the students already knew about getting a job. He then led the class through a series of activities designed to give the students hands-on experience in seeking employment. For example, these activities focused on analyzing the job market, assessing one's own values, exploring alternatives, preparing job fact sheets, developing resumes, writing cover letters, filling out job applications, interviewing, choosing the right job, and keeping the job. Each activity lasted about a week, and the semester ended with a post-test to assess the students' progress.

During these first few months, Bergen relied heavily on a bound teacher's guide which included daily lesson plans and model exercises for each area. Bergen continued to get updated and revised materials from the product developer for the next two years.

Bergen also received a considerable amount of help from Bob Falter, the ISD's placement director. Falter had helped conduct the August workshop at which Bergen was trained. During the fall semester, he came to Bergen's class each week to observe, offer suggestions, and provide updated materials. On one occasion he even simulated a job interview for the class. He came less frequently during the second semester, though he still visited now and then. Bergen saw Duane Johnson just once during the entire 1977-78 school year, and not at all in 1978-79.

Most of the adaptations made by Bergen during the first semester were minor and, on the whole, represented additions to the existing materials, rather than real adaptations. For example, the product included only written discussions for students about the nature of the job market. At Falter's suggestion, and with his help, Bergen supplemented these written materials with films from the ISD on job interviews. He also changed the model cover letter for resumes to include a request for an interview.

Following the first semester Bergen made substantial changes in the product on his own initiative. He felt that the original product focused too much on the details and mechanics of securing a job and not enough on why someone would be looking for a particular kind of job in the first place. His students agreed with him. Consequently, in the second semester, Bergen compressed most of the original product into the second half of the semester and spent the first half on what he called "self-exploration"--helping the students decide what they wanted to do.

Bergen made these changes to improve the product's value, based on implementation experience during the first semester. However, he also made another change in the second semester that was prompted by the high rate of absenteeism characteristic of Bayfield's seniors as they approached graduation. By mid-semester attendance in this class (and all other classes as well) was so erratic that Bergen was unable to maintain continuity of instruction from day to day. Consequently, after the seventh week of class he shifted to an organization based on discrete modules that students could work on independently at their own pace. So, for example, one module included writing resumes, preparing cover letters, and compiling personal data. Another consisted of filling out applications, preparing for an interview, and actually participating in a mock interview before the class. Students devoted their class time to working individually on each module and, after demonstrating to Bergen that they had completed it (usually by showing him the resume that they had prepared, or the letter that they had written), moved on to the next module. These major adaptations to the product were undertaken by Bergen almost totally on his own. Bob Falter knew about the changes, but was not consulted prior to their implementation. Principal Babel was only vaguely aware of them.

CAREER EXPLORATION

Implementation of the course on career exploration lagged far behind the course for seniors. The chosen product was developed by Appalachian Educational Laboratories and published by McKnight. It consisted of permanent materials such as filmstrips, audio cassettes, card indices of occupations, and a teacher's manual. It also included expendable workbooks for children. Its purpose as described by those in Bayfield was to acquaint children with different careers through exploration of career alternatives and also by having students explore their own values and aspirations.

It was Principal Babel's initial intention that Carl Frank be the only teacher to teach career education and that all resources for the career exploration product go to him. Frank was selected by Babel for two major reasons. First, Frank taught eighth graders, and Principal Babel felt that this was the appropriate age to introduce career exploration activities in the school. In the eighth grade a student was old enough to begin thinking seriously about career options, but still young enough to plan his or her high school curriculum in preparation for a chosen career. Second, Frank was already interested in career education and had introduced it to his eighth-grade classes. He did not have to be sold on the idea.

The decision to convert the junior high program to a middle school made the original implementation plan impractical. With children grouped by ability rather than age it was not possible for a single teacher to instruct all eighth graders in career education. All teachers had to be responsible for instruction in all subjects. Moreover, the career exploration materials did not arrive until May 1978, just before the end of school. There was to have been an inservice in the product at that time, organized by Johnson and conducted by a professor from Northern University, but this workshop was postponed by Johnson because he wanted to get more ISD schools to participate. Finally, another workshop was scheduled for August. During this workshop a representative from McKnight Publishing Company presented a one-day overview of the materials to teachers from Bayfield and other schools in Dillon-Sokol ISD. The workshop was organized by Duane Johnson and financed by project funds.

Shortly after this workshop Principal Babel met with his middle school teachers and learned that they still felt too insecure to implement the new product. He asked Duane Johnson for another inservice to give his teachers hands-on experience with the materials. Johnson referred Babel to Ray Johns in his office who arranged for the professor from Northern University to come to Bayfield and work with Babel's teachers. This second inservice was held November 11, 1978.

As a consequence of these delays, implementation of the new career exploration product did not begin in earnest until the final six months of the project. According to staff, implementation was proceeding slowly, given the more pressing problems brought on by the conversion to middle school. By the end of the 1978-79 school year, two of the middle school teachers were presenting one-hour weekly units to their students using the product. According to Babel, these teachers were trying to implement the material faithfully, as the developer intended, rather than adapting or modifying them for their own needs.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, Bayfield should probably be counted as a "success" story. If a criterion for success is solving a real educational problem in the school, there is at least some indication that Bayfield succeeded. If the criterion is selection and implementation of a research and development product, with appropriate modifications, then again they succeeded. Perhaps most importantly, there were strong indications that the implemented products would endure after federal funding had ended.

Yet the process that Bayfield staff used to identify their problems and select solutions was not itself new. Although the state project staff saw themselves as introducing twin innovations in participating schools--an R&D product and a problem-solving process--for all practical purposes there was only the product innovation in Bayfield. The project had little effect on the procedures by which teachers and administration in Bayfield identified problems, selected solutions, and implemented products in the classroom. In Duane Johnson's words, "They won't be hurt by what they did, but they didn't truly go through the process." If anything, the problem-solving process in Bayfield was more centralized and less participatory than the typical problem-solving process in the school.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) "A politician's power stems less from what he can legally force others to do than it does from his skill in using his talents as a 'broker' to get others with more power than he to join him." To what extent does this comment by an advocate of the political perspective on change apply to the principal in this case?

(2) In Bayfield, the superintendent and principal ignored the results of a formal needs assessment among residents that had indicated that art education was viewed as the top priority need. The two administrators decided to focus instead on career education. If you had responded to the survey, how would you react to such "high-handed behavior"? If you were the superintendent, how would you defend yourself?

(3) Bayfield implemented both an employability skills course for high school seniors and a career exploration program for junior high school students. The first was implemented far more quickly and with less difficulty than the second. Why?

(4) Identify what you consider to be the major "turning point" in this case, i.e., the event that made the difference between success and failure.

(5) "Whenever I consider a significant organizational change, I think it through very carefully but I do not discuss it with those involved. I wait until I have anticipated all the contingencies and complaints that might affect the change, decide how to handle each and every one of them, and then I make the change as quickly and directly as possible. Perhaps this causes some initial shock and resistance but it is preferable to the anxiety and confusion caused by slow participative attempts at organizational change." Discuss this comment in terms of the leadership strategies used in this case.

CHAPTER 6

SUGARVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

E. Christian Anderson

Lack of support from administrators, constraints on broad faculty involvement, attrition among team members, and discontinuity in assistance from external change agents all helped hamstring the attempt to upgrade the educational program at Sugarville Elementary. Struggling against the odds, the three staff members who were responsible for the change effort persisted until eventually two new math programs were adopted. Even then, the lasting impact of the innovations was not assured. With the departure of two of the three team members and high turnover among the teachers trained to use the programs, it appeared as though the new materials would gather dust on the shelves and very seldom be used.

A high rate of attrition among teachers was not unusual at Sugarville; some years the turnover in faculty reached 50 percent. The main reason was the rural nature of Plains County, the area served by the Sugarville School. Located in the interior of a southern state, the county's 750 square miles were devoted almost entirely to agriculture. The 5,500 inhabitants were well enough off, except for the migrant farm workers and the American Indians. The canefields and pasture land of the county sheltered abundant small game, and the lakes and streams teemed with fish. But beyond hunting, fishing, and solitude, Plains County had few amenities to offer. The largest municipality was the county seat, Sugarville, a town of 1,100, and it lacked even a movie theater. A ninth grade education was the norm for the county's inhabitants age 25 or over; only three percent had college degrees. The nearest university was 150 miles away.

A TROUBLED SCHOOL

Sugarville Elementary School and the high school next door were the only schools in the county. Their combined enrollment was 1,100, with 650 pupils in the elementary school. Thirty-five of the district's 70 teachers taught at the elementary level.

Though the school buildings were modern, the educational approach was traditional, since the people in Plains County were quite conservative. The school's instructional areas, originally designed for open classrooms, had been partitioned into more traditional arrangements. In the recent past the school had experimented with an ungraded K-3 program, but it was never fully implemented, and the school soon returned to a graded system. In the 1979-80 school year, art, music, and physical education would be dropped from the curriculum because of a lack of space. Some attempt was made to offer extracurricular and enrichment programs and field trips, but the major focus of the school was on the basic skills: reading, writing, and arithmetic. These skills were at the center of most concerns expressed by teachers, for most of Sugarville's elementary students scored below grade level on nationally normed reading and math tests.

Discipline was an occasional but serious problem. Sixty-four percent of Sugarville's students were white, 20 percent black, 8 percent American Indian, and 8 percent Hispanic. (Some 15 percent were classified as migrant.) Plains County was fragmented along racial-cultural lines, and the tensions among the various groups frequently surfaced and found expression among the public school students, who resorted to violence with one another. On two occasions in a recent year the schools had been closed for several days to allow the heat generated by open conflict to subside.

The Plains County school district had seven full-time administrative staff, but the routine demands of bureaucracy and the logistics of maintenance and operation occupied most of their time. The elementary principal, Glen Girard, was near retirement and in poor health. The superintendent, a former fifth-grade teacher at Sugarville, was mostly concerned with modernizing and expanding the school's physical facilities. Both administrators were aware of and sympathized with the community's conservative values. Thus, neither one had the time or the inclination for concentrated attention to curricular or instructional innovation.

The previous superintendent had perhaps been more venturesome. At any rate, he had involved the Plains County school district in a teacher education center then being formed to serve five rural school districts. In the early 1970s the state had authorized the formation of TECs, as they were known, to encourage cooperation among universities, school districts, and teachers and to improve inservice education programs. The district's affiliation with the TEC relieved it of the burden of preparing a yearly master plan for inservice education, a state requirement. It also paved the way for Sugarville's participation in a federally funded project to help solve school problems.

A MISSED MEETING

When the problem-solving project was inaugurated in this state, the TECs took on the role of intermediary agencies between state project resources and local school staff. The TEC with which Plains County was affiliated held an initial orientation session on the project in mid-September 1976. No one from Plains County bothered to attend. However, since the TEC's plan called for one elementary school from each district, and since Sugarville was the only elementary school in Plains County, it was not long before the TEC's representative, Dr. Joseph Jones, made an appointment to see Principal Girard.

Jones had been hired as the TEC "linker" or field agent. His background included an Ed.D. degree in administration and supervision with a minor in curriculum and instruction. As a university professor he had assisted a number of secondary schools with curriculum problems, general supervision, and self-study. Since he had taken a leave of absence from his university, he was free to consider a new assignment. When the project came along, he welcomed the opportunity to work full-time with the TEC and in the field, away from the university.

Furthermore, he seemed a good candidate for the job. In his dealings with schools he did not present himself as an expert with solutions to any problem. Rather his approach was low-key; he offered suggestions and alternatives without attempting to force particular choices on school staff.

Although no one had a clear picture of what a linker should do, and he himself had no specific expectations, he perceived the project and his part in it as simply a new and better way to provide his accustomed services to schools.

Jones met Principal Girard on September 29 and introduced him to the project. He explained that the project would help the school identify a problem and later choose from among field-tested solutions suggested by the project's experts. The project would also provide five thousand dollars for expenses. There was just one requirement: the staff would have to take an active role in the project. Several would be trained as facilitators, who would then lead the entire faculty through a sequence of problem-solving steps.

Girard assured Jones that his teachers would gladly involve themselves in this effort. He himself would support the project, although he could not devote much time to it. He promised to organize the facilitator team quickly and to inform Jones as soon as it was organized.

A FEW GOOD MEN

Principal Girard was as good as his word. Later that day he encountered the school counselor and two of the school's five male teachers in the men's room. Girard asked them if they would form the facilitator team to oversee the implementation of the project, and they agreed. Girard called Jones the next day and advised him to work directly with the facilitator team.

Notwithstanding the manner in which they were appointed to serve as facilitators and the fact that they were all males in a predominantly female setting, the three men were a potentially good choice. All were young, energetic, and had graduate degrees. They were serious, dedicated, and thoughtful school people, aware of the problems in their school and determined to exploit this new opportunity.

James Prouty, the guidance counselor, was the most firmly established in the school district. He had made a commitment to himself and his family to remain in Sugarville and to develop his career there. He liked the Plains County lifestyle and felt he was in a good position for professional growth. In the past, the county had relied on "borrowing" professional guidance services from larger districts; these Prouty now provided. His experience and the trust he had built were a good basis on which to found a long-term career, and he was already Principal Girard's main helper and advisor. He was aware of the social and political realities of the situation and tended to work with the deliberate and careful attention of one who is remodeling a house he expects to go on living in.

The two teachers had credentials which made them potentially more mobile. Charles Parker had completed the Ed.S. degree and sought advancement, but the opportunities were limited in a small district with few administrators. In addition to teaching in the elementary school, Parker ran the district's adult education program. He was less reticent than Prouty about the problems of public education in Plains County, and perhaps more cynical.

Nevertheless, Parker and Prouty functioned well together and would do the bulk of the work for the project. Edgar Thorpe, the other classroom teacher, was not as integrated into the life of the school system. His sights were on the future, and he viewed his job at Sugarville mostly as a stage in his career.

INITIAL PLANNING

The three facilitators met with Joe Jones on October 1, 1976. Jones explained the project and gave them copies of an organizational needs inventory. In the next few days the faculty at Sugarville Elementary filled these out to provide the basis for a problem identification procedure. At that point the school's participation in the project was announced to the faculty.

Armed with a growing awareness of the scope of the project and specific data about teachers' perceptions of their needs, the facilitator team and the field agent went to the first project training conference. It was held in early October at an urban location in another part of the state. The team returned from that session with more knowledge but somewhat less certainty about how it was all going to work. Their training in project goals and processes had emphasized that the model required active involvement of school faculty. The difficulty with that soon became obvious: after-school faculty meetings were rare, and there was little opportunity for cooperative planning during the busy school day. Although the project would pay for teacher release time, the few substitutes who were available were dismayed by the school's discipline problems and often unable to control a class themselves. Thus, the principal was unwilling to take advantage of the opportunity for release time. Instead, he called and then cancelled several faculty meetings before one finally took place. The facilitators managed to get 15 minutes on the agenda to discuss project planning with the teachers; however, little could be accomplished in so short a time.

During this period the field agent continued to meet with the facilitators regularly; he responded readily to their frequent phone calls and helped them to become better trained in surveying faculty concerns and developing problem statements. Denied access to the total faculty by the absence of regularly scheduled faculty meetings and by the principal's habit of calling and then cancelling special meetings, the team members resorted to less formal contacts over lunch, between classes, and after school. By mid-January of 1977 they had accumulated a considerable amount of demographic data and information on school problems.

A FALSE START AND NEW BEGINNING

In January 1977 the three-man facilitator team attended another intensive training session for field agents and facilitators. There they learned about group process approaches to problem identification and analysis, which they called "interesting," "exciting," and "valuable." Their preliminary problem statement, drafted at the end of the training, singled out the lack of qualified substitute teachers as a major problem in Sugarville.

Prouty, Parker, and Thorpe saw the substitute problem as one that could be solved rapidly, while giving them a chance to learn about the state project. With considerable help from a professor who had been their trainer at the January session, the team developed a plan to train substitute teachers and submitted it to the superintendent. The superintendent liked the plan; however, he decided that the proposed strategies could be accomplished with local effort and resources, and that it should not be pursued as a project activity.

Undaunted, the team began to develop a new problem statement, but without the help of their trainer. The trainer's intensive involvement with the Sugarville site had not been anticipated or provided for in the project funding and created some ambiguity in the role of the site's official field agent, Joe Jones. In the case of Sugarville, the trainer had a preexisting relationship with the TEC and assumed that his continued activity with the school would be sponsored through the usual channels. He had thus spent several days a week at the school over a period of about a month. However, at about the time that the superintendent decided to implement the substitute training program without help from the project, the TEC determined that its limited resources could not sustain the intensive activities of the trainer in Sugarville. Unable to reconcile their differences, the TEC director and the trainer agreed to terminate the relationship, much to the puzzlement of the Sugarville facilitators, who were not fully informed of the project's intricate structure. This was another setback in a series of critical events, the cumulative effect of which was diminishing enthusiasm in the long run.

The initial setback following this incident was not too severe, since Joe Jones stepped in to fill the gap left by the trainer. The facilitator team reviewed the needs assessment data and faculty surveys. They decided that a second area in which teachers felt they needed help was the teaching of basic skills, especially math. The team decided to concentrate on the third and fifth grade levels, since these were target groups for a new statewide testing program.

Joe Jones assisted the team by getting in touch with Jed Root, a faculty member at his university, who was experienced in math education. Root declared he was willing to work as a consultant with the Sugarville faculty. A series of three Saturday workshops was scheduled, and the teachers were paid a stipend from project funds to attend. For the first time in the project, the faculty met together in a working session.

Root began the session with an attempt to discover exactly where the school was with regard to its math program. He could discern no consensus or common level of understanding among the teachers. Consequently, it was necessary to reconstruct, bit by bit, a total picture of how math was being taught. That process, though time consuming, revealed that the achievement test which they had been using was old and not consistent with their implicit goals and objectives. The consultant advised them to replace the test with one more current, which they did.

At the same time that the weekend training in math was being conducted, the TEC field agent and the facilitator team prepared a new problem statement based on the emerging identification of needs in their math program. The statement was approved by the principal and in March 1977 was forwarded to the solution search unit of the project staff.

The statement noted the low achievement on reading and math tests of Sugarville students, and placed part of the blame on the students' backgrounds and on the poor formal education of their parents. It also acknowledged that few of the faculty and staff were adequately prepared in teaching strategies employing diagnostic and prescriptive techniques to improve student performance. There was a further lack of appropriate materials to help them personalize instruction of underachieving students. The team set a goal: to reduce by 25 percent the number of students testing below expected grade level at the end of the 1977-78 school year, with the emphasis to fall on mathematics in grades three and five. The product chosen to achieve this goal should stress mathematics concepts and metric measurement.

The team also listed a number of negative criteria, or limitations on any proposed solutions. The solutions must not call for additional personnel, ignore the "ruralness" and the non-mainstream culture of students, conflict with the conservative value system of local ruling bodies, or involve more changes than teachers and administrators could handle. Satisfied with their work, the facilitators looked forward to the search unit's response.

MORE FRUSTRATIONS

The search unit responded to the problem identification statement a month later. They suggested several programs but especially recommended a combination of the KeyMath diagnostic testing program from American Guidance Services, Inc., and the Basic Mathematics Skills self-paced instructional kits from the Southwest Regional Lab (SWRL). The facilitators examined the suggestions and got feedback on them from faculty and from Jed Root, their university math consultant. Since the suggested programs would require much teacher training, and since the team was uncertain whether the Sugarville context really met the criteria of the SWRL and KeyMath programs, they decided to look for alternatives.

Prouty, the guidance counselor, asked Sugarville's math consultant to suggest some other materials; he proposed a commercial package, McCormick-Mathers, which had been used successfully in a large, urban district in the state. The package looked good to the team. They contacted the superintendent for his approval, and he concurred. For a brief period there seemed to be cause for celebration. However, one hurdle remained in their way. They queried project management about the possibility of funding an option not suggested by the search unit. The response was unequivocal; the design of the project, and the terms under which it operated, required that only products validated by the state be funded. Since the commercial package was not validated, the answer had to be no.

Prouty, Parker, and Thorpe experienced real disappointment at this setback. Here it was, the end of the 1976-77 school year; they had been working on this project since the beginning of October, and they still had nothing to show for it. It had been practically impossible to meet with the full faculty to get their reactions and solicit their support; the first problem statement had not been approved by the superintendent; and the trainer with whom they had worked so well had left the TEC. Despite the lack of active support from the school and county administration, the facilitator team had persevered, drafted a second problem statement, and identified a preferred solution. Now they discovered it was forbidden.

Once again they contacted the solution search unit with a request for more options to examine. When the response yielded no products that appealed to them more than SWRL or KeyMath, they resigned themselves to doing what it seemed was expected of them. With the help of the field agent, they wrote a solution implementation proposal which described SWRL and KeyMath as best suited to the needs of Sugarville. The proposal was approved in turn by the new principal, the superintendent, and the project staff.

SPOTTY IMPLEMENTATION

That summer, there was the usual high turnover among teachers in Plains County. One of the departing teachers was Edgar Thorpe, who left the district to seek a position with more responsibility. Principal Girard, who had been in ill health most of the year, retired. His replacement approved of the proposed changes in the math program but remained just as passive as Girard in his support. With their enthusiasm for the project greatly diminished, the two remaining facilitators, Prouty and Parker, made plans for a SWRL and KeyMath training session in August, just before the start of the 1977-78 school year.

In August the entire faculty attended a one-and-a-half day training session in the SWRL and KeyMath programs. Jed Root, the university math consultant, planned and carried out the training with the assistance of the facilitators and the field agent. The faculty viewed the training session favorably, since they knew that improvements in the math program were sorely needed.

KeyMath filled the need for diagnostic/prescriptive testing. It consisted of a 30-minute test covering 14 skill areas--from basic readiness to advanced arithmetic applications. The math teacher administered the test to one student at a time, using a large notebook that could be set up as an easel. As the teacher flipped the pages, the student would see full-color pictures of familiar objects, while on the other side of the easel the teacher would be given instructions for getting answers to such questions as: "How would you feel if it was 43 degrees Fahrenheit in this room?" A manual for test interpretation helped the teacher provide prescriptive instruction on the basis of the pupil's performance. The SWRL program filled gaps in the school's math curriculum and was planned as a supplement to the regular textbooks. Unlike KeyMath, SWRL did not make demands on a teacher's time. The SWRL kits could be used by pupils without supervision, and even the tests and exercises were self-scoring.

When the school year began, many teachers made a sincere effort to apply what they had learned in their teaching of math. However, the brief training they had received left them somewhat uncertain in their use of the new programs. Joe Jones paid periodic visits to the teachers to check on their problems and progress, but other than that there was no follow-up training. As the year wore on, the teachers tended to ignore the supplemental programs, as they concerned themselves with getting through the regular textbooks.

In the spring the school was visited by an instructional audit team from the state department of education. The auditors reported that the math program did indeed have adequate materials, but that further coordination and training were needed. It seemed that the materials were not always being used as designed.

At the end of the year, Charles Parker resigned to accept a position in another state. His resignation, which caught many in Plains County by surprise, left James Prouty as the sole surviving member of the facilitator team. With very little administrative support and limited resources for additional teacher training, it appeared as though the SWRL and KeyMath programs were destined for oblivion--at least at Sugarville Elementary. Given continuing high turnover in teachers and administrators, the school's involvement in the federally funded change project would soon be a dim memory among the few people who were there when it happened. Certainly, there would be no lasting impact on the school's problem-solving process. If the project were to be remembered at all, it would be remembered as "how we got those math materials."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) The principal of Sugarville School never really participated in the change process. He committed the school to the project and then turned it over to the school counselor and two teachers. Suppose that the principal's indifference had been a deliberate strategy to foster staff self-reliance. Discuss the merits of such an approach.

(2) Sugarville School and Bell Elementary, a school discussed in a previous case, had several common characteristics. Both served low-income and low-achieving populations, confronted home environments not conducive to learning, and had severe problems in reading and math. How did differences in leadership and participation account for differences in the case histories?

(3) Rate the effectiveness of the facilitator team at Sugarville School. If you had been principal, how would you have improved its effectiveness?

(4) The project's head office refused to allow the Sugarville faculty to adopt an unvalidated product they really liked even though the office had been unable to come up with a validated product that met perceived local needs. What effect did this ritualistic adherence to project guidelines have on the outcome of the local change effort? If you had been principal, what would you have done after receiving the project's response?

PART 3

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

CHAPTER 7

GREENFIELD JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Terrence E. Deal
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The story of Greenfield Junior High School would fit many other suburban schools. The school was once viewed as a lighthouse school where inspired, competent teachers taught subjects to bright, receptive students. But population shifts brought new faces from a nearby city--many of them black. In five years the proportion of blacks in Greenfield rose from 12 to more than 50 percent. This migration changed more than just the racial composition of classrooms. The reading skills of the new students were lower and their behavior considerably different from that of preceding student populations. Many of the students could not read class assignments; some now told teachers quite bluntly what they could do with the assigned work.

Many Greenfield teachers became discouraged. Part of their frustration was obviously a result of trying to cope with new problems using old techniques that no longer worked. But they were frustrated and discouraged for other reasons as well. Most were mid-career teachers with 10 to 15 years experience and had served at Greenfield for their entire careers. The economic pinch made it necessary for some teachers to hold second jobs or to leave teaching for jobs in enterprises outside education. Many others reported a feeling of being trapped and not knowing how to get out. The organization and climate of the school added to the sense of frustration. While the school enjoyed a solid reputation for academic excellence, it was essentially conservative. Teachers were organized into academic departments and felt pressure from the district to "teach their subject"--even though students could not read. Teachers also felt somewhat constrained in choosing new materials and frequently unsupported in their efforts to change the curriculum. A number of programs had been added to improve reading skills, a reading teacher, a reading center, a developmental reading program, and a reading program in English classes; but the connection of these efforts to the lives of most classroom teachers was marginal at best. Many teachers resigned themselves to just doing the job as best they could.

Teachers also resisted external pressures to change. Some claimed that too much was expected from them already; others were skeptical since they had been burned twice before by changes imported from outside. Nevertheless, district administrators were "hustling" to find external resources to support needed improvements. The district's reading coordinator was especially interested in obtaining outside resources. The search for outside resources connected the reading coordinator with a consultant from one of the regional collaboratives in the state. Greenfield was selected to participate in the federally funded RDU program.

Prior to embarking on the RDU effort, Greenfield was not unlike many suburban schools where shifting environmental conditions brought changes to the character of the school. Now outside resources would encourage new patterns of behavior, as teachers were to systematically define problems, search for tested solutions from a national pool, implement the chosen programs, and assess the results. But the external funds also created a new drama in which a cast of characters followed a new script under the watchful eye of an audience composed of administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the local community.

This case study will outline this drama, focusing on three main issues: (1) how did the innovation get linked to existing efforts and ongoing energy? (2) what did the process come to mean at Greenfield? and (3) what happened as a result of the three-year effort? The case study was constructed from information collected from interviews at two points in time--in the fall of the second year of the project and in the fall following the projects third and final year.

THE DRAMA AND CAST OF CHARACTERS

Several characters played interesting roles in the local drama. For instance, the district reading coordinator provided the impetus to get the drama under way, but entered the process only when resources were needed, when key decisions were being made, or when the main cast of characters needed an extra boost.

The principal played a marginal supporting role. Another participant noted that the principal "didn't pressure us; he's got good people to do the job." The reading teacher reported, "He was right behind me, but I was the one who had to do it." Other teachers felt that the principal supported particular things for self-serving reasons: "He only supported those parts that would help him to look good--like the Read-in." Others saw the principal as indifferent: "In this school, the principal is not behind any change--he is more concerned with order in the classroom and quiet in the hallways--he only gave us lip-service support." Finally, there are teachers who felt that the principal actually detracted from the performance: "He actually undermined the public relations campaign and the Thursday workshops. The woman who volunteered to do regular articles for the newspaper was given an extra study hall and no encouragement. Teachers who were released from studies to participate in planning were constantly reminded that their classrooms were left in the hands of substitute teachers." Some sensed that the principal could have played a more central role in the drama: "It would have been so much easier if he had taken a more active role; instead, we had to take him as a given and figure out how to get things done despite him."

The project's field agent played a more central role in the drama. She provided leadership, support and legitimacy: "She gave us the kick that we needed; she'd tell us what we had to do--she knew because she had gone through those things before." But, despite her centrality, the role of the field agent took different forms as the drama progressed. The field agent herself saw her role as swinging between that of an "active participant" and a "passive observer." To her, the major contribution of her role was to keep the local decison-making group on task--something that was often difficult: "It is virtually impossible to get anything done." Her departure from the cast was seen as premature by the reading coordinator: "The whole thing never really got off the ground. Just as we started to move, the funding ended."

The leading actors in the Greenfield drama were combined together in a decision-making group, or DMG. The group consisted of six classroom teachers, the reading teacher, and the field agent; the principal and district reading coordinator served as ex officio members. In casting the DMG, the district reading coordinator and principal decided to pick teachers who were resistant to change--the "recalcitrants"--in addition to teachers with more favorable attitudes toward innovation--the "innovators." The rationale for this was that by involving those typically opposed to change, their willingness to support the new reading program would increase. Therefore, as the program was implemented, there would be "fewer to convert." Three teachers from the social studies department were required to participate; three from the English department were encouraged to join the group. The informal leader of the group was the junior high reading teacher who provided expertise in reading as well as initiative in moving the process along.

In the early planning and assessment stages, a larger group of 20 teachers, working with the field agent, identified the central problem in Greenfield as low reading levels among a large proportion of the student population. Although student attitudes and behavior were important concerns, reading deficiencies were seen as the underlying problem--something that could be tackled by instructional strategies. Primarily through the impetus of the reading coordinator, the problem of reading was redefined as that of "getting reading into content areas." Most of the early search for potential solutions was carried out by the field agent, in conjunction with the reading teacher and the district reading coordinator. The DMG as a group was presented with two options--the Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction (ECRI) and San Diego (Right-to-Read (R2R). Mainly through the influence of the reading teacher, the group chose San Diego (R2R). The DMG then over a two-year period of meeting in summers and during released time modified, rearranged, and eventually transformed R2R into GRAG (Greenfield Reads and Grows). Although the main components of the San Diego program survived--the Read-in and the pattern of reading instruction in the content areas, the DMG dropped the tutor and community involvement components and radically altered the diagnostic tests.

As the DMG worked and as it produced visible products, it was watched carefully by an audience of administrators and many teachers. Its final report--the design for GRAG--was presented to an audience of the entire faculty in a ceremony with appropriate pomp and circumstance. As GRAG began to move into action, a school-wide Read-in enlarged the audience to include parents and local residents. Interviews with the cast and selected members of the audience highlighted three key issues which emerged: (1) the activities of the DMG converted the "heathen," formed GRAG from the "nutty-putty" of R2R, and provided an important event in the life of Greenfield; (2) the activities of the DMG and its byproducts became a symbol of hope and renewed confidence, encouraged new relations in classrooms, and created new labels for tricks that classroom teachers had always used; and (3) as the drama wound to a close, both actors and audience wondered whether it had succeeded. In the absence of local critics to render an opinion about what the drama expressed, attention turned to what it had accomplished. The outcome is still unclear, but behind the ambiguity lurks the possibility that some very interesting changes have occurred.

THE WORK OF THE DMG: R2R to GRAG

The pressing need at Greenfield was reasonably clear even before the group process got under way. Although classroom discipline and students' attitudes were problems, the higher priority concern was reading scores falling considerably below average levels and getting worse. Several school-wide efforts were already under way to improve reading skills: the English program, a developmental reading program, and the reading center. These efforts were overseen by Greenfield's reading teacher. A school-wide schedule change to group students by ability levels was another effort. These efforts were seen as helpful, but insufficient and too far removed from the world of classroom teachers. By making reading the business of subject-matter teachers important resources could be added without additional costs. In addition, the efforts of other programs might be reinforced in the classroom.

During the first year the DMG spent its time defining the problem more clearly, developing criteria for guiding the selection of a solution, and actually choosing a product that fit Greenfield's reading needs. While several products were considered, most notably the ECRI program, the group eventually selected San Diego Right to Read (R2R).

There was some discussion about whether R2R was appropriate for Greenfield. But, pressed by the reading teacher, other DMG members finally agreed. To an outsider reviewing the R2R materials, a first reaction might focus on the program's amorphousness. The product consists of a grab-bag of process techniques, instruments, reading techniques, and guidelines for conducting a Read-in. But, at the same time, the impact of the program on reading scores has been documented elsewhere by the National Diffusion Network's review process. In theory, at least, if Greenfield implemented R2R, it would work. But there was also a recognized need to tailor the program to Greenfield's unique circumstances. Doing so was the principal task of the DMG's second year.

The DMG began its work in the summer. As the process got under way, it was clear that balancing innovators with recalcitrants was not going to make the road an easy one. All participants reported considerable tension and conflict during the summer meetings. The recalcitrants appeared to drag their feet while the innovators were chomping to move ahead. The reading teacher became a prime mover in dealing with both technique and attitudes; and the field agent wondered whether the decision to include diversity within the group had been wise.

The DMG opened the second school year with a workshop featuring the originators of the R2R program in San Diego. The main purpose of the workshop was to transfer San Diego's expertise to GRAG. Instead, the consultant appeared to become a target for many of the group's internal conflicts. During and following the consultant's visit a popular sport among DMG members was "goading the outsider." Oddly, this seemed to vent internal tensions, solidify the group, and encourage a firm commitment to make R2R over in Greenfield's image.

In 12 full-day sessions during the school year (teachers were covered by substitutes), the DMG set to work developing and modifying tests, materials, and techniques; developing a readability scale for measuring the difficulty of existing reading materials; and forming plans for the Read-in. While the tension between the innovators and recalcitrants arose now and then, the group pushed ahead without the acrimony of earlier sessions. The teachers themselves became students of reading, the reading teacher became the teachers' teacher, and the field agent kept the group on task. A shared vocabulary emerged, and joking about various terms--such as "syllabication"--seemed to bind the teachers together. As the group moved along, teachers outside the DMG became curious--especially since the recalcitrants seemed to be enjoying the task. The principal complained from time to time about substitutes and classroom discipline.

The efforts of the DMG were finally put together in its final report--a Black Book of tests, materials, and techniques for teachers. The debut of the Black Book came in the spring. R2R was now GRAG; the R2R materials, in improved form, were in the Black Book. During the process, the recalcitrants appeared to have undergone a conversion. The key idea of including them in the DMG seemed to have paid off.

GRAG BECOMES A SYMBOL OF HOPE AND CONFIDENCE

The DMG's work was presented to the faculty in two phases. In the first, the group reported to the entire faculty. In the second, more specific information was presented to the English and social studies departments. Special attention was given to the concept of readability, the concept of teaching reading in content areas, and the various exercises and materials of the Black Book.

In the full faculty meetings, the DMG's presentation was undoubtedly more dramatic than most. The curious work of the group was now revealed as productive labor resulting in a teacher-designed program, GRAG, with a tangible product, the Black Book. In addition, the presentation was accompanied by positive testimony from teachers who were known to be cynical about nearly everything. Teachers had done something; heathens had been converted and bore witness in front of their colleagues. Maybe, thought the teachers, this was something different.

Work then centered in the English and social studies departments--each composed of seven teachers--with the idea that it would be expanded to other departments in the next year. Here the effort shifted from ceremony to socialization. Each teacher was provided with a tangible way of judging the level of difficulty of texts or other reading materials. Each teacher was given a rationale for why teaching reading in content areas was needed and legitimate. Together, teachers reviewed the materials and techniques in the Black Book--receiving leadership from peers in the DMG. They learned how to give, summarize, and interpret reading tests; they learned how to teach specific reading techniques; they were given time to practice new skills; and they were introduced to a common vocabulary. The year ended on a high note, and GRAG was set to go into operation the next year.

As the third year began two aspects of GRAG got under way. In individual classrooms, teachers began to use specific techniques from the Black Book. The readability scale was used successfully by the social studies department to gauge the level of existing materials; many teachers were amazed by the results. Diagnostic tests were given to form a classroom profile of reading scores; again, many teachers were surprised. Many of the teachers began to use specific techniques on a class-wide basis to teach reading skills; however, the range of use was wide, particularly among social studies teachers. But by most estimates nearly all the English teachers and about 70 percent of the social studies teachers were doing GRAG in the way it was intended.

For some teachers, the new emphasis on reading reinforced techniques they were already using and provided new labels for practices they had always followed. For others, the Black Book seemed to provide some security in reorienting teaching strategies from strictly content to reading skills. For a few, the new approach represented a significant change in their overall teaching, since they were now encouraged to think ahead, plan, and assess results. Within most English and social studies classrooms, GRAG seemed to be off to a running start. The reaction of teachers ranged from zealously optimistic to fairly enthusiastic. Everyone knew about the Black Book; most kept it handy; a healthy majority put it to use. The spirit of the DMG seemed to be contagious and could be expected to spread easily to other departments in the next year.

Within the school as a whole, the main activity of GRAG was the Read-in, a period during the school day in which everyone--students, teachers, administrators and support personnel--was required to read a book. Despite some initial reluctance from teachers, plans for the event--spearheaded by a DMG member--moved into full gear. Buttons and emblems connected the Read-in to GRAG. With prodding from one member of the DMG, the media announced the Read-in and promised full coverage.

On the day of the Read-in, 25 minutes were set aside for everyone to read a book of his or her choosing. The event spawned many stories. In a gym class, a teacher and students participated reluctantly at first but then wanted to extend the time. A custodian "read" a book in public view even though he could not read. The principal was seen reading I'm Out for Number One. Students jumped on their peers who were noisy or did not appear to be reading. Many of these stories (and others) were reported in the media; many were circulated by word of mouth within Greenfield. Teachers who had been skeptical were won over and asked for more. The public seemed elated that reading was a priority in a public school. Teachers, students, and administrators seemed to have a common bond, and enthusiasm seemed to spread from GRAG to other aspects of the school's program. Across the board, teachers and administrators reported high levels of satisfaction with the school-wide activity that GRAG had introduced. Within classrooms and within the school, GRAG had introduced a level of enthusiasm that few such changes could claim. GRAG had become a symbol of hope and confidence in a school that had previously been plagued with frustration and insecurity.

THE SEQUEL TO THE SUCCESS STORY: DESPAIR AND DEEP CHANGE

Some would predict that Greenfield revisited two years later would confirm a unique event--an effort to change something about a school had worked! Others, guided by the Hawthorne findings, would predict that any effects would wear off once the excitement and attention of the initial year had waned. Neither of these, however, captures the complexity discovered in our second set of interviews, which raised interesting and perplexing issues about the drama of change in Greenfield.

In some ways, Hawthorne proponents are right. After two years of implementation, the full bloom of GRAG was no longer obvious. Teachers still used techniques from the Black Book, but the book itself had moved from desk to closet. Read-ins were still held, but the eyes of students, administrators, or teachers did not twinkle nor did faces beam when the event was mentioned. Some even suggested that the event had become a bother. The DMG still met, though not regularly, and the meetings lacked the electric excitement they once had. Also, the field agent had gone, and some seemed to have trouble remembering her name.

In addition, many of the difficulties that Greenfield experienced three years before remained. Teachers were still leaving for new job opportunities. Many students still could not read at grade level. Students still acted out in classrooms. Teachers were still frustrated. In fact, many of the teachers who had been enthusiastic about GRAG had now reversed field--especially members of the DMG.

Taken at face value, the results at Greenfield might squelch the optimism of those who would have predicted results different from most change efforts. But there is another interpretation--Greenfield teachers and administrators did not know whether they had accomplished anything. To know, they would need tangible evidence or external confirmation; but they had neither. GRAG had become routine. To the Greenfield staff, institutionalization did not feel like success; instead it created ambiguity about whether anything at all had changed.

But, as we pushed people in interviews, their responses revealed changes in individuals and in Greenfield as an organization that were so deep that they seemed to be beyond the conscious grasp of teachers or administrators. Several examples illustrate the breadth and depth of the impact of GRAG on Greenfield teachers.

Luba, the Phoenix. Luba appeared dramatically different in the second interview. Physically, she dressed more colorfully, wore contact lenses, and had her hair in a very contemporary style. Attitudinally, Luba appeared optimistic, happy, glowing, and remarkably self-confident. Her enthusiasm and excitement were engaging and contagious. Professionally, Luba was full of hope, and she talked openly about the change she felt in herself: "The kids hated me before; now they are turned on--they come with their notes--there is a real interaction between my moves and theirs. It's a real internal change in me because I see what I am doing is having positive results. Something interrupted the spiral down and sent energy into an upward force."

Some of the credit for this change must go to GRAG: "GRAG gave me sensitivity to kids." Luba remarked that much of what GRAG brought she was already doing: "It's not all new; it reinforces skills I already had, but now I have support. GRAG tells me I am doing the right thing. I don't feel so isolated, because I can see that we are all in the same boat. At first I resented GRAG because it was just relabeling, but when I see the connections between their concepts and mine, I feel support."

Despite her obvious changes, Luba still felt disappointment in GRAG, perhaps because the active excitement of the DMG was gone. The Read-in did not seem as urgent any more. Also, Luba felt it should have spread beyond English and social studies: "It was a good experience cut short. Of course I'll continue to do all these things, but now I'm on my own."

Gloria, the Crotchety Lady. Gloria, an older woman who looked as though she might eat students for breakfast, began the interview by asking, "Which is the RDU? I get a little confused because there is so much overlapping." It appeared that she would have little positive to say about GRAG. She criticized the GRAG test as "too easy" and said the Black Book was well done but "I know the stuff anyway, so I keep it in the closet." She questioned initially whether the time and energy spent on GRAG had been wasted.

Then, suddenly, she began to talk in glowing terms about the impact of GRAG. "The program has done a lot for us because now there is a general emphasis on reading that I was not conscious of before. We are all working together on teaching reading." Although Gloria noted that the new clinical program for low-ability students was tied up in this reading effort, she did feel that the emphasis came from the DMG: "People were meeting and reporting back to us--it gave me a feeling that we are really pushing reading." She thought the Read-in was great because it had become a routine, and even the Black Book could serve a purpose from the closet: "You know, once a year when you clean up, it is there to remind us of what we do."

The interview ended with an eloquent testimony from this lady who had seemed so negative at the start: "We all teach reading now. We have no choice. It is infused into our curriculum--into our heads."

Fran, the Dedicated Professional. An energetic and sophisticated looking woman, Fran held the reputation of the serious teacher who was most willing to put in extra time and to experiment with innovation. In the second interview she seemed disappointed. For her, the excitement, support, and leadership of the project had dissipated, leaving little more than routine. She reported the hope she had felt in the first two years, hope based on the chance to work with others on an important issue--the chance to "share ideas." But the dream didn't go far enough for Fran. First, people tended to give up because their contributions were met with cool suspicion or because they feared that others would put down their ideas. Second, Fran had wanted the ideas of GRAG to spread beyond English and social studies, but they never did.

Still, Fran was not all negative: "I do think the school got something out of GRAG. The Read-in is a visible product. And the skills in the Black Book are ones that a good English and social studies teacher would want to teach anyway. Now there is a new awareness and importance placed on teaching these skills." Perhaps Fran was disappointed in the success of GRAG because her expectations were so high. She had hoped that GRAG would bring an atmosphere in which teachers would not feel threatened and would therefore try to do what she had been doing all along. She admitted it was easier for teachers like herself who already knew how to teach these skills--with the support of GRAG they could teach with more confidence, more style. For those, however, who had been unable or unwilling to teach these skills before, GRAG was simply another program to put down. Fran had viewed the arrival of GRAG as the chance for a great change in her professional life and in the school. Because, for her, GRAG brought more reinforcement than it did reeducation, Fran was disappointed. Because for the school GRAG brought more of a reorientation of thought than it did a lasting flurry of new activity, Fran was not satisfied.

George, the Realist. George, one of the "recalcitrants" in the DMG, was seen as a spokesman for other teachers. "If George likes it, then it has got to be okay" was a common remark. George viewed himself as more of a realist or pessimist than most. About the school's reading problem George said, "I don't think anything can be done; junior high is too late." Yet, he admitted to using a lot of the concepts in the Black Book: "I use a good portion of it--which, to be honest with you, I did not expect."

For George, the project affected him because it gave him hope: "I thought the ideas might motivate the kids--and they are skills the kids need." Also, being on the DMG gave him the chance to talk to and get new ideas from colleagues he did not normally socialize with: "We talked about education; it stimulated me. Before, I had always talked with my buddies about golf." As for the program's success, George was neutral: "Everybody saw it as good; it's just that there are a lot of other things, like the economy, that occupy us. But the ideas are there--in the background, but there."

Frank, the Doubter. Frank represents that solid, average type of teacher who feels pressure from his department to keep up his content teaching while realizing that to learn content the students must also be able to read. When he was asked about the effect of the project, he shrugged his shoulders and said, "Things are pretty much the same." But when he was asked about the specific components of GRAG, his answers revealed something different. He gave the test and used the results to "get a feel for each class." He also liked the Read-in: "It's a nice break." Although he did not use the Black Book, he admitted, "I could use it."

While Frank never got excited as he spoke of GRAG, and always wore a look of doubt, he captured the role of GRAG in the school: "You know, it's no big deal; I mean, we've all done the things, the skills GRAG emphasizes. It's just a question of taking the time to put them into lesson plans. We all need shots in the arm from time to time. GRAG was one of those shots. What it really did was to reinforce what we already have."

Thus, the story of GRAG has left its audience with a variety of ambivalent emotions. Both the actors and audience came to the play with expectations and hope. Some expected solutions to their growing teaching problems; some hoped for a new outlook, a sort of reinvigoration; some expected that it would bring colleagues together to share ideas and feelings. As the play drew to a close, however, some were disappointed since most people appeared to be teaching the same as before; others felt a strong undercurrent of support; and one even considered herself transformed. One thing is clear: while everyone agreed that no massive change had occurred, something had happened. Whether GRAG had provided a shot in the arm, a reinforcement of what had already begun, or an entirely new direction could be debated. Nevertheless, the school now had what might be called a new corporate image: Greenfield was now a reading-conscious school. English and social studies teachers might tell you that their job was to teach their subject, but they would also quickly add, "We teach reading, too."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) The Greenfield DMG was picked by the reading coordinator and principal to include both "innovators" and "recalcitrants" in order to coopt the latter into supporting the program. In general, what is your opinion on the efficacy of this approach? How did it work out in this case?

(2) Describe and analyze the relation between morale and performance in this case.

(3) Chapter 2 explained that people hold different beliefs about what is of primary importance in accounting for the outcomes of any activity or event in schools: individuals, schools as organizations, and school context. Which belief is most cogent in analyzing what happened in Greenfield?

(4) What could have been done differently to sustain interest in and enthusiasm for the Read-ins?

(5) In terms of the reading program at Greenfield School, it was unclear whether GRAG had provided a "shot in the arm, a reinforcement of what had already begun, or an entirely new direction." What do you think? Speculate about future developments.

CHAPTER 8

PENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Deborah A. Moses

In the Penton school district, the decision to add career education units to several subject areas paved the way to a massive revision of the elementary curriculum. Though the reading and math curricula remained unchanged, the social studies, science, and health curricula were to be integrated as one unit, using career education as the binding ingredient. This was intended not only to help the district meet a state mandate to provide career education, but also to enhance overall student achievement. This, at least, was the site coordinator's "game-plan," and acceptance of funds from two state-level dissemination programs did little to deviate him from his course.

Penton was a suburban working class community of 8,000 in a North Central state. The township had previously been farmland, but in the 1960s young blue-collar and middle-management-level workers began emigrating with their families from the nearby industrial city of Hamilton. By the mid-1970s there were only 10 or 12 working farms left in the area, whereas there had been 50 or 60 such farms just a few years before. Although Hamilton had a significant minority population of blacks and chicanos, Penton stayed predominantly white.

Some 2,200 students attended Penton's six small schools: four elementary, one junior high, and one senior high. There were 100 teachers and seven administrators, including four at the secondary level. The two elementary principals, Carl Williams and Sybil Moore, were responsible for two schools each. Together they bore the full responsibility for curriculum planning and coordination, in addition to day-to-day administration of their schools. The superintendent acted as the chief administrator, fiscal agent, and liaison with the school board.

In Penton there was a strong emphasis on the basic skills. No one gave much thought to career education until 1974, when the state's Career Education Act was passed. The Act mandated career education planning in all school districts and set up Career Education Planning Districts (CEPDs) across the state. Most CEPDs were lodged in the state's intermediate school districts (ISDs), which provided administrative and instructional services to member school systems. Penton was a part of the Cardon ISD and its corresponding CEPD.

The Cardon ISD had been a leader in the development of career education programs even before the state law was passed. As recipient of a state grant to develop career education definitions and models, the ISD had conducted a two-year pilot project in career education, beginning in 1972. Several of the Penton school staff had been involved as demonstration teachers, but the lasting effect on the Penton curriculum was slight. Few of Penton's teachers were interested in career education; some felt it would be an added burden, others that it would require a different teaching style.

Some simply did not understand what career education meant and were unaware that it included things they were already doing--such as teaching elementary children about community helpers.

Passage of the Career Education Act forced the Penton administrators to take stronger action. In November 1975 they formed a 15-member steering committee to develop district learning goals in three areas: self-awareness, occupational awareness, and academic skills. Comprised of teachers and administrators from all levels of instruction, the committee examined existing classroom goals and objectives and also took into account the common goals established by the state department of education. Once general educational objectives were identified, subcommittees were appointed to write goals specific to the elementary, junior high, and senior high levels.

The committee then distributed a survey to parents, taxpayers, students, teachers, administrators, and local business persons in both Penton and Hamilton (where most Penton residents worked). Those surveyed were asked to rate the importance of the established goals in each area: self-awareness (12 goals), occupational awareness (6 goals), and academic skills (13 goals). Additional questions focused on the appropriate role of the schools in achieving each goal and the effectiveness of the district's current programs. Thirty-five percent of those surveyed responded to the questionnaire. Of these, nearly all agreed that the occupational awareness goals were the major responsibility of the school. Over 80 percent felt that these goals were "important" or "very important."

These results convinced the school board and administrators of the need to make Penton's curriculum more relevant to occupational awareness, yet they did not want this to be done at the expense of the basic skills. Principal Carl Williams, who was also curriculum coordinator for grades K-4, was charged with finding an answer to the problem.

FINDING A SOLUTION

Williams already had one lead. In the fall of 1975 he had met Jeffrey Torbic, originator of the Career Development Centered Curriculum then being developed in Coloma, Michigan. The Coloma product, designed for students in grades K-6, appealed to Williams because of its creative blending of career education with basic skills instruction. Williams corresponded with Torbic over a period of months and in this way gained familiarity with the Coloma product. He found the literature to be informative and persuasive, though at this time the product was still in its developmental stages.

The steering committee had suggested that career education units be added to the social studies, health, and science curricula; but Williams believed teachers were too busy to add new units to existing subjects. Moreover, teachers were already complaining that these subjects were redundant and needed restructuring. Williams decided that the Coloma product could provide the "glue" for restructuring these subjects as one unit, eliminating the redundancies and adding the career education content at the same time. He was also convinced that the Coloma product would enhance basic skills instruction, rather than detract from it.

In June 1976 the Coloma product was certified by the state as an effective educational program. Williams decided it was now time to introduce the product to Penton's teachers and other building administrators. Accordingly, he arranged a staff workshop and invited Torbic to make his presentation. After the workshop, Williams talked to individual teachers to determine their interest in pilot testing the product in their classrooms. Based on their responses, he decided that with financial support from the state, the Coloma product could be piloted in Penton schools during the 1977-78 school year.

Just as he was about to apply for state adoption program funds, he received a phone call from Roland Scott, the CEPD coordinator for Cardon ISD. Scott informed him of another state program which could probably help. To obtain funds from this program, a district must form a "site team" of teachers and administrators to identify specific needs, examine products, and select a product to implement. Scott called Williams because he knew that the Penton district had already completed a needs assessment and that Williams was looking for a product to address the district's goals. To Williams, this announcement was a timely coincidence. Although he already had a product in mind, he assumed he could use the additional funding to pay part of its cost. He therefore submitted applications to both the state adoption program and the new, federally sponsored program.

His applications were accepted in January 1977. However, to conform to program guidelines, only part of Penton's funds from the second program could be used to implement the Coloma product; the rest must be used to review alternative products and to conduct a testing program to evaluate Coloma's effectiveness in addressing the district's learning goals. At the end of one year, the district could decide whether Coloma or some other product best suited the district's needs. Williams accepted these conditions without hesitation; organizing a site team and going through the required problem-solving motions seemed a small price to pay for the additional funds that would be made available.

PLAYING THE GAME

Williams did select a site team, but his own comment on its role was, "We have one because we're supposed to have one." In other words, the site team was formed to meet program requirements and not to make decisions. Instead of being a member of the team, Williams was in charge of it. In fact, the team was hardly more than a support mechanism for Williams' own decisions. Now in his forties, Williams had been a principal in the district for 14 years. He was used to making decisions in a firm and convincing manner, while at the same time making sure he had the support of the teaching staff. Far from rebelling, his teachers appeared to like his firm guidance.

The members of the site team included Sybil Moore, the other elementary school principal. Moore was also the district's curriculum coordinator for grades 5 and 6. Even though she had been working in the district 13 years longer than Williams and though she had similar responsibilities, she appeared to have far less influence in the district. Moore seemed to acknowledge Williams' leadership, and as a result they worked well together. Also on the team were four teachers, one from each of the participating schools, and two parents.

Though Williams was sincere when he agreed to review alternatives to the Coloma product, the search for other products immediately ran into problems. According to the program design, Roland Scott should have received product information from the state program office in the fall of 1977. However, the state did not begin to circulate its product fact sheets until early in 1978. Even then, said Scott, "The number of fact sheets was sparse." By that time in the project, Penton was in the second semester of implementing Coloma and Williams was concerned that he had not reviewed enough products. Williams was annoyed with the state and felt that Scott's ability to help him had been handicapped by late arrival of the project's fact sheets.

Luckily, Scott had his own sources of product information. He first gave Williams an NIE career education source book, saying, "Why not try this?" Williams wrote letters to publishers and developers listed in the source book but found this method to be slow and unproductive; in most cases he never heard from the people to whom he had addressed his letters, and in cases where correspondence did occur, it was time-consuming. In the meantime, Scott passed along brochures and pamphlets he got in the mail as the ISD's director of instruction. This information was at least more current.

The most useful source of products proved to be the Center for Vocational Education at Ohio State. Scott sent Williams to the Center for a three-day visit in March 1978. After that, Williams corresponded with one of the Center's consultants, whom he found quite helpful. At about this time the state's product fact sheets finally began arriving. By the end of the year, Williams was familiar with many elementary career education products. He ordered a number of sample sets to be examined by himself and members of the site team.

IMPLEMENTING COLOMA

Meanwhile, implementation of the Coloma product was going much more smoothly. In September 1977, before classes started, all K-6 teachers in Penton participated in a two-day inservice workshop conducted by Jeffrey Torbic, the developer of the product. No additional training was found necessary, since the product was largely self-explanatory.

Coloma consisted of a number of special curriculum units meant to be infused into an existing program. The units called for a variety of teaching strategies, including role play, classroom discussions, field trips into the community, talks by "role models" in the classroom, and the use of audio-visual materials. For instance, kindergarteners had a police officer visit their classroom; second graders visited a local bakery; third graders visited a local restaurant and set up a restaurant at school; and fifth graders visited a hospital and had a nurse visit their classroom. The purpose of all these activities was to increase students' awareness of life roles, to develop their decision-making skills, and to help them in formulating realistic self-concepts.

For the most part, Penton teachers used Coloma in the classroom just as the developer had intended. Williams strongly encouraged them to do so. All teachers were required to use four Coloma units during the pilot year. Substituting a field trip for a guest speaker, for example, was permitted as an adaptation, but omitting an entire unit was prohibited. Williams was able to monitor the implementation process by recording on the Coloma Implementation Checklist the dates when grade-group meetings were conducted, when units were first implemented, and when the evaluation tabulation forms were submitted by each teacher. The checklist also contained information on the number of guest speakers, role play/simulation sessions, and field trips.

Roland Scott stayed in close contact with the Penton staff during the first few months of the year. Thereafter he talked with Carl Williams by phone about once a week and visited about once a month. Besides trying to locate additional career education products, Scott also conducted what amounted to a publicity campaign for the district staff. He praised Penton's activities at parent-teacher meetings and at professional development seminars in the intermediate district. He also made sure that Williams and the project teachers were presenters at a statewide occupational education conference. This publicity brought both prestige and visibility to the project teachers and to Williams.

THE SITE TEAM

As noted earlier, the site team played no part in the problem identification process, nor was it involved in the search for additional products. Some members expressed regret that Williams did not consult them during problem identification; instead, he went ahead and presented the group with his decisions. Williams explained that he acted on concerns previously expressed by the teachers themselves.

Even though Williams might appear to be a hard-nosed, dominating leader insisting that things go his way, there was at least one important reason for this. The initial, perhaps most crucial, steps in the process had already been addressed when the site began the project. A career education problem had been identified, and the decision to try and find a product to meet district needs had been made. Carl Williams had already been assigned to this task for the elementary grades. A site team was organized, however, because it was a condition of the project. As for the state's problem-solving process, Williams considered it "too idealistic and not suitable to what we needed." He later said, "Had I followed their process, and waited for their fact sheets, I would not have gotten anything accomplished by the end of the project." Roland Scott said that the state's problem-solving model "probably got in the way" of Penton's efforts. He saw the model as a theoretical tool for himself and not as a rigid guide for local staff.

Williams and the site team did attend two workshops conducted by the state program office but saw them as poorly structured and disappointing. The first workshop (on identifying needs and stating goals) was considered useless by Williams because the Penton district was far beyond this stage from the beginning of the project. The second workshop (on reviewing products) was more useful but still did not provide the depth of skills training which Williams and his teachers had expected. In fact, Williams felt that the workshops had been so unproductive that the time and money devoted to them were ill spent.

While the site team members had little say in product selection, they did assume a more active role in implementation. They participated in the two-day workshop presented by Torbic, and they reviewed the product further before it was actually used. They made notes of any problems they had in implementing Coloma in their classrooms and included in these notes the comments of teachers who were not on the team. Later, the site team used the teachers' comments as a basis for comparing Coloma with other products. Teachers who were not on the team made their views known at monthly faculty meetings conducted by the principals, Williams and Moore.

The parents on the team played an important part too. Some members of the community were suspicious of the new Coloma product. They feared that career education was just another vehicle for tracking students by scholastic ability. The two parents on the site team were instrumental in relieving their anxieties.

At the end of the school year came the time for decision: should they keep Coloma and, if so, what changes should they make? Together, Principal Williams and the site team went over the teachers' comments. One complaint was that some of the Coloma units involved too much paperwork; another was that the Coloma units took too much time and left little room in the schedule to cover other materials in science, health, and social studies. Finally, the teachers felt that the Coloma units did not include enough activities to stimulate self-awareness. They felt they could revise the units to make them more appropriate, but Williams was sure he could find a product suitable to their needs and save them this task.

Based on the teachers' comments, Williams decided to drop one or two Coloma units per grade and replace them with other units. From units hand-picked by Williams, the site team chose a self-awareness unit for grades 2-4. They also selected units on grocery stores, forestry, and oceanography developed by the Ohio State Center for Vocational Education; and, as the first unit of the year, they chose "Energize at Sunrise," a unit developed by the Kellogg Corporation on nutritional science, health, and careers.

EVALUATING THE PROJECT

Obtaining quantitative evidence that Penton's students were positively affected by the project was important. More than anything else, Wiliams wanted to show that the new program not only satisfied the need for career awareness but also helped to develop academic skills. As in other major decision-making tasks of the project, he developed the framework for the evaluation himself. The evaluation involved three sets of tests: the annual state assessment tests, tests developed by Torbic for each Coloma unit, and criterion-referenced tests designed by Principal Williams and several of his staff. The development of this testing program absorbed a great deal of the district's external funding for the project. By conventional evaluative standards, the students' test scores provided scant evidence of positive change in the educational environment. Williams, however, interpreted the results as an indication of increased student achievement in the basic skills.

Whatever their impact on student achievement, the changes in classroom practice were profound. Fortunately, because the district's goals had been set several years before, the teachers were conditioned to expect some changes. In any case, they found that working with the new materials was exciting, and that the field trips and guest speakers made the surrounding community more visible to the children in school. In addition, the career development approach had helped to coordinate the elementary curriculum and had eliminated duplications across subject areas.

Acceptance of external program support had given a strong-willed administrator the chance to test his hunches. The outside funds were not the stimulus for change, but rather the means of achieving changes that were already conceived. Through these means, Principal Williams had masterminded a rather massive restructuring of the curriculum, though the initial intent was only to add a few career education units to existing subjects. Above all, the changes had been achieved at very little expense to the district.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) In a previous case, Parker Valley, teachers enjoyed significant participation in decision making. In contrast, the Penton principal made most decisions on his own. Does there seem to be any relationship between decision-making styles and the success of product implementation?

(2) Examine the extent to which the Penton experience reflects a rational problem-solving process. Discuss the significance of any deviations.

(3) Suppose you were hired to succeed Principal Williams, who is described in this case as a unilateral decision maker. Your own inclination is towards participative leadership. What problems might you encounter?

(4) Principal Williams developed an evaluation scheme for this project that involved three tests: (1) annual state assessment tests, (2) tests developed for each Coloma unit, and (3) criterion-referenced tests to measure progress on district learning goals. Do you feel that these tests adequately measured the range of possible outcomes of Penton's participation in the career education project? If not, what alternatives would you suggest?

CHAPTER 9

SASQUATCH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Peter Desmond
Karen Seashore Louis
Ann Gleichert Murphy

The reading curriculum project in the Sasquatch district was part of a long-range effort to improve the teaching of reading. The district's problem and the preferred solution had been identified years before federal funding became available; these funds simply contributed to an ongoing process. Even the project's field agent, who might have been expected to contribute substantially to the Sasquatch effort, found himself taking a back seat to the district's reading consultant. These facts do not detract from the real success achieved in the participating schools.

Sasquatch school district comprised four rural and suburban communities near a large, northwestern city. The residents were largely middle class, and many commuted to the nearby city, where they held jobs in industry, real estate, and higher education. The area had not always been a bedroom suburb, and enough old-timers, primarily farmers, remained to exert an influence on local politics. Together with middle-class conservatives, the old-timers had defeated three of the four school levies proposed from 1972 to 1975; district staff ruefully referred to 1976 as "the year the two levies were lost." Restricted to a fixed financial base in a time of rising costs, the district had had to reduce its work force to make ends meet.

Operation on a limited budget also meant that the district could not easily reform its reading curriculum, a goal since 1973. Traditionally, every reading teacher had taught reading as she or he felt best; the resulting variation meant that not all of the district's 7,700 students were reading up to the level of their ability. One of the goals that the district had established in 1973 was to introduce one sequenced reading program in all the elementary grades, together with a reading management system. The former would reduce the confusion experienced by pupils changing from one grade or school to another. The latter would permit reading instruction to be individualized, by providing for ongoing diagnosis of a student's reading problems, prescription of materials to address those problems, and record keeping to chart the student's progress in specific skill areas.

The committee responsible for drawing up the goals had been headed by Gwen Evans, the district's director of reading and language arts, and included a teacher from each of Sasquatch's seven elementary, three junior high, and two senior high schools. The goals had subsequently been approved by the principals, the superintendent, and the school board. However, after the adoption of the Ginn 360 reading series in all the district's elementary schools, too few funds were available to install a reading management system district-wide.

Meanwhile, various schools experimented on a limited basis with some of the reading management programs then available. Two tried using materials from the Fountain Valley management system, but these did not prove acceptable. Another, Artemis Elementary School, became involved in a demonstration project using the Wisconsin Design for Reading management system. A fourth school, Sunrise Elementary, also implemented part of the Wisconsin Design in 1975-76. Two other schools planned to wait until Ginn developed its own reading management system before proceeding further.

While Evans and other district administrators hoped for a levy to pass, they also looked into the possibility of obtaining outside funds. Evans funneled some state funds to Sunrise to pay for a part-time reading aide in 1975-76. She also learned from the district's curriculum coordinator about a federally subsidized project to help schools improve their reading programs. They quickly submitted an application naming five schools in the district--two elementary schools and the three junior highs--as potential sites. The application was accepted in the summer of 1976; it was only then that the principals of the schools were informed of the project.

The principals of Sunrise and Hillside elementary schools had no objection to participating; on the contrary, the funds provided by the project would be a great help in putting their management systems in place. One project requirement was that each school set up a task force, including teachers and parents, to plan project activities. Edith Foster, the principal of Hillside Elementary School, was not one to work with a committee when she could make a decision unilaterally; even so, she accepted the creation of a school task force with good grace. It must be said that teachers were not convinced of the value of reading management systems; however, as part of a task force they would at least have some say in the process of installing such a system.

Serving on both task forces would be Gwen Evans, the district's director of reading, and Herb Milton, the field agent for the project, an employee of an intermediate state educational agency.* The task force in each school was chaired by that school's principal. At Sunrise, the task force included the librarian, a teacher aide, two parents, and three teachers. Hillside's task force, in contrast, was never as broadly representative, for it included only four teachers. Each group started the 1976-77 school year with two full days of planning. By the spring of 1977, when the problem statement for each school was submitted, the task forces had held two or three additional after-school meetings.

LOCAL TALENT

Evans soon emerged as the real leader of both task forces. Although the groups were supposed to identify a problem in each school and then search for an appropriate solution from a pool of research and development products, the district had long before gone through these steps. In some sense, then, task force activities were pro forma, and Evans was responsible for guiding the task forces in the desired direction. She met privately with the field agent and the principal of each school before each task force meeting to coordinate and plan task force activities. She also acted as a facilitator at meetings, drawing on her considerable experience with group process.

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*Field agents in this project were known as "linking agents" or "linkers."

Evans was, in effect, acting as an internal change agent, making Herb Milton somewhat superfluous. However, Milton had no desire to act like a "pushy expert" and was content to keep a low profile, offering only an occasional comment. If the groups had no need for his skills as facilitator, they did look to him as a resource person. He conducted a number of searches for products, put the district in touch with sources of information, and organized workshops. The task force members appreciated his efforts, which saved them some time.

The effects of Evans' guidance were clearly shown in the problem statements and selection criteria drawn up by the two task forces. While the primary emphasis in each school's problem statement was different--Hillside stressed services for children above and below grade level while Sunrise emphasized the need for a sequenced program--both schools identified needs in the following areas:

1. Strategies and techniques for teaching comprehension;
2. Instructional materials to provide intermediate steps between levels in the Ginn 360 program;
3. Alternative programs and resources for the able reader:
4. Materials related to the objectives of the Wisconsin Design for Reading in word attack, study skills, and comprehension; and
5. Compilation and categorization of existing building materials according to the Ginn 360 organization.

Moreover, the selection criteria were almost identical. The solution chosen must meet the needs of high and low ability students; its cost must be realistic; and, a key criterion, the solution must conform to district goals. It was no surprise when both task forces identified Wisconsin Design for Reading as the preferred solution to their school's problem. As noted, Sunrise Elementary had begun implementing the Wisconsin Design in the fall of 1975, even before the reading improvement project began.

In November 1976 the task forces of Sunrise and Hillside schools met jointly to coordinate the introduction of Wisconsin Design materials at both schools. Wisconsin Design consists of three strands: word attack, comprehension, and study skills. Only the word attack strand had been introduced at Sunrise, and usage varied from teacher to teacher. The joint task force decided that Sunrise teachers would begin to use the comprehension strand as well. Both word attack and comprehension would be implemented at Hillside, but consideration of the study skills strand would be delayed until the end of the school year. Wisconsin Design materials might fill the gaps that teachers perceived in the Ginn 360 curriculum; more importantly, they would allow for diagnosis and prescription of students' problems with reading.

As the year passed, teachers began running into a problem: Ginn 360 and Wisconsin Design introduced reading skills in different orders. Milton responded to this problem by arranging for a Wisconsin Design consultant to give a workshop in April 1977. The 12 teachers from Sunrise and Hillside who attended the workshop described the difficulties they were having in meshing Wisconsin Design and Ginn, and the consultant made recommendations for solving them. But it soon became apparent that palliative measures would go only so far; either the management system would have to be redesigned to fit the Ginn series, or the series would have to be changed to fit the management system. By May the two task forces had decided to redesign the management system; a five-day work session was scheduled for August.

The August session included 12 teachers from three elementary schools--Sunrise, Hillside, and Artemis. Gwen Evans served as chairperson; though Herb Milton was present, he kept his usual low profile. He had arranged for another Wisconsin Design consultant to give a two-day workshop as part of the work session. The remaining three days were spent correlating the Wisconsin Design word attack strand with the Ginn 360 organization and preparing a handbook, "Let's Get Together," for distribution to teachers in September.

The handbook specified at which points in the Ginn curriculum the Wisconsin tests should be administered; it also suggested additional resources for use in teaching various skills. The Sunrise and Hillside teachers could find these additional materials in a reading resource center at each school. The materials, arranged by reading level, included some from Wisconsin Design; others had been developed by individual teachers. At the request of the school task forces, Milton had requested a search of the project's knowledge base for R&D products that might fill perceived gaps in the Ginn curriculum or supplement Wisconsin Design materials on word attack, comprehension, and study skills. The results of these searches were also housed in the reading resource center.

Use of the Wisconsin Design materials intensified in the 1977-78 school year. For the previous year (or two) teachers had been free to use Wisconsin Design as they wished. "Let's Get Together" was an attempt to standardize, as well as encourage, the use of Wisconsin Design. The presence of a reading aide in each school was another form of encouragment; the aides were there to help teachers by testing and grading students, keeping reading records, and policing the reading resource area. One disincentive, however, was that teachers never received inservice on the use of the handbook; the result was considerable variation in the timing and administration of tests. Even though the value of the Wisconsin Design tests was recognized--notably, their specificity and usefulness for diagnosis--the testing process was still time-consuming, despite the reading aide. At least some teachers showed no interest at all in the project's activities; they were oblivious to the thought behind "Let's Get Together" and unaware of the supplementary materials available in the reading resource room.

The work of the coordination committee continued through the 1977-78 school year. In November it met to reorganize the comprehension strand. Herb Milton arranged for a consultant familiar with Wisconsin Design to meet with all the teachers. None of the consultants so far had been very exciting, and this one was the worst. Part of the problem, to be sure, was that the school district was adapting the Wisconsin Design to its own needs;

the consultants were more experienced in working with schools that had adapted their reading programs to suit the management system.

The coordination committee took note of teachers' complaints and suggestions during the winter and spring; in April work was begun on a revised version of "Let's Get Together." By June the second version was complete. It took into account the new Ginn 720 series that would be used in the fall and spelled out in greater detail how to mesh the Wisconsin and Ginn materials.

Implementation of Wisconsin Design received a further boost in the fall of 1978 by the hiring in each school of a half-time reading specialist. The specialist introduced new teachers to Wisconsin Design and helped those already using it when they encountered difficulties. The specialist and aides did not monitor use of the innovation, nor was use made mandatory. However, all the teachers made at least minimal use of Wisconsin Design materials, if only to test once or twice a year in order to maintain their students' records.

At least some teachers, though perhaps not a majority, used the test extensively as diagnostic instruments. They gave a test at the beginning of a particular skill level in order to determine what their pupils' specific weaknesses were. If post-testing showed no improvement, the teachers could draw on the resources at the reading room for remedial material in that particular area. By the end of the year, perhaps 40 percent of the teachers were using the tests and supplemental materials for diagnosis and prescription.

OTHER PROJECT GOALS

The task forces both at Hillside and Sunrise were interested in programs for gifted and talented readers. In the fall of 1977 the two groups asked Herb Milton to conduct a search of the knowledge base for reading products for the gifted. The search turned up no appropriate products. Task force members who had heard about the Junior Great Books program then decided to investigate that possibility. The field agent obliged them by making arrangements for a two-day inservice in February 1978. The event, attended by 50 teachers, administrators, and parents from the five schools participating in the reading project, was a great success. Within a month plans were being made to introduce techniques for able readers at seven district schools.

The Hillside school also hoped to find a program for kindergarten students. They decided on one developed by the Southwest Regional Lab and sold by the Ginn Company; teachers were trained in its use by a consultant for Ginn.

One goal of the reading project, introduction of the study skills strand of Wisconsin Design, was not realized. The departure of Gwen Evans in the summer of 1979 robbed the project of its driving force. The local task force at Hillside continued to work in a desultory fashion on the matter. At Sunrise, the librarian began to implement part of the study skills strand. On the whole, though, attention had shifted to programs for the gifted.

It was the district's long-range goals that had caused the schools to participate in the reading project. By the end of the project considerable progress had been made in meeting these goals. As of September 1979 six of the district's eight elementary schools were using Wisconsin Design for their reading management system. The other two had adopted the new Ginn management system along with the Ginn 720 materials; however, the board of education had decreed that all schools must eventually use the Wisconsin Design.

Two other district-wide results had not previously been established as district goals: teacher participation in school or district-level planning committees and expanded inservice education for teachers.

The idea of sharing authority with committees was not congenial to every principal. Thus, when a new principal who believed in centralized decision making came to Sunrise school, the local action team soon disbanded. Its functions were assumed by the half-time reading specialist. In contrast, the team at Hillside persisted; Principal Foster had learned to work with it. As the use of Wisconsin Design spread, a team was set up in each school to oversee its introduction. And Evans' successor as district reading coordinator, inspired by the success of the coordination committee, planned to introduce other multi-school or district-wide committees to solve problems in a participatory fashion.

A number of the inservice activities carried out during the life of the project had been disappointing. Nevertheless, one of the complaints most often heard from the teachers was that they needed more inservice to better implement Wisconsin Design; the five-day workshop of the coordination committee in August 1977 and the Great Books training session of February 1978 were frequently pointed out as models.

In the fall of 1979 a change in the state law governing allocation of school funds proved to be a windfall for Sasquatch. District officials took advantage of the opportunity to promote staff development by funding teacher retreats on such topics as teaching composition and Junior Great Books.

Teachers and administrators alike were glad they had participated in the reading project. Its success and effectiveness could not be attributed to the field agent; his role was minor. Nor did it owe much to the pool of product information that the project had made available, since only supplementary materials were selected from the pool. Rather the key seems to have been the project's integration into an ongoing effort under the direction of a skillful internal change agent.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) Of the three perspectives on change (rational, political, social systems) which best describes the approach of Gwen Evans, the district reading director? How about Herb Milton, the field agent? Would a different approach have been more effective for either individual?

(2) How closely did Sasquatch school district conform to a "rational" problem-solving process? What difference did the degree of conformity have on school outcomes?

(3) Put yourself in the role of Gwen Evans for a moment. You know that some teachers have shown no interest at all in project activities; they do not use Wisconsin Design and remain unaware of the supplementary materials available in the reading resource room. Use rational problem solving to decide what, if anything, to do about these recalcitrants.

(4) What were the key strategic decisions in this case regarding (1) the problem-solving process and (2) product implementation? Who made them? What effects did each decision have on project outcomes?

(5) Teachers invested considerable amounts of time and effort in adapting the Wisconsin Design management system to fit the Ginn reading series, even though adaptations of the reading series to fit the management system were already available. Why? What effects did this adaptation process have on school decision-making processes and product implementation?

CHAPTER 10

TREELINE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Robert Halpern

The school improvement project in Treeline was a smoothly administered attempt to infuse career education materials into a few classes in a small school. Given a limited budget, those in charge of the project felt that this modest approach had the best chance of changing the negative attitudes toward career education held by many of the Treeline staff. However, the departure of half the teachers involved in the project at the end of the first year of implementation reduced even the limited impact that the administrators had hoped for from the project.

Treeline was not typical of the North Central state in which it was located. This moderately sized city of 100,000 was the site of a major state university with 45,000 students. The university was the biggest employer in town; together with the research and development firms that had sprung up in the area, it gave Treeline a large middle-class population. One result was that the educational aspirations of Treeline's families were high; another was that a strong liberal influence was brought to bear on a community which was traditionally conservative in its politics.

Treeline had experienced tumultuous changes in the late 1960s. Anti-war protests on campus were followed by high school student riots and racial conflict. Previously uninvolved residents began to take part in local politics, and for the first time they elected a progressive school board. The board then brought in a dynamic superintendent from the East, who instituted wholesale changes in the school system before a conservative reaction set in and he was fired. The current superintendent was a local figure, who was very much respected and had lasted eight years. Still, the years of turmoil had left their mark. The educational community, one local official said, was left "deeply upset, discouraged, and seeking a return to the stability of the early sixties."

A CHANGING POPULATION

Still other social forces were at work during those years. From 1969 to 1977 the proportion of black children attending the 36 public schools almost doubled, from 8 to 15 percent. Some black parents charged that low-income and minority children in the district were being "labeled for failure" by a school system that was interested in serving the needs only of white, middle-class children.

Charles Elementary School, serving grades K-6, was a microcosm of Treeline. Many of its 16 classroom teachers and 16 resource and support staff remembered the years of turmoil in the schools and tended to shy away from progressive ideas or products introduced by outsiders. Until 1975, the school had served only middle- and upper-middle-class children, mostly college bound. But construction of low-income housing in the area had changed the student body; thereafter, one-third of the 400 pupils were from poor families.

The change in student population had its effects. Teachers had to deal with a wider range of abilities and skill development among their students. A major innovative effort in the school, a multi-grade, team teaching experiment that had pleased many middle-class parents, was cancelled after the shift in the school's population. One reason given was that poor children needed a quiet, structured environment. Elaine Sargent, the school's principal, favored individualized instruction, particularly given the school's current make-up. However, she generally gave teachers considerable leeway in the materials and approach they used in their classrooms. She was a low-key administrator who left most decisions to individual teachers.

Until the state legislature passed a Career Education Act in 1974, only a few teachers included career education activities in their lesson plans. Since then Principal Sargent had become more aware of the importance of career education, though she also felt she should protect her teachers from unreasonable pressures to innovate. Nevertheless, Charles Elementary was to become the site of Treeline's career education effort.

THE PROJECT

The Treeline district was one of 10 school systems served by the Weston County Intermediate School District (ISD). Following passage of the Career Education Act in 1974, a Career Education Planning District (CEPD) was also established in Weston County; Kurt Waller, the ISD's vocational-technical specialist, became the county's CEPD coordinator. In mid-1976, he was informed by the state department of education that a statewide project to encourage the use of career education products was being planned and that he was to be the field agent for his ISD. He passed the word along to the 10 school districts in the county. Five, including Treeline, expressed interest; the remainder decided that the effort required by the project was not worth the money involved. Why the department of education chose Treeline is not clear. In any case, Treeline's superintendent received notice of acceptance in January 1977 and sent the notice and its accompanying material along to Monroe Spender, the district's director of career education.

Spender had a dual role in the district, serving as director both of career education and of vocational education. Spender had been "the prime mover in career education in the school system" during the sixties and early seventies, according to one teacher. However, he was now facing the prospect of managing a one-million-dollar vocational education budget, and so would have little time for the new project. Talking it over with Ron Lacotti, a counselor in a Treeline high school, Spender expressed the view that the five thousand dollars the project would bring in were hardly worth the extra administrative burden. Lacotti, who was younger and less experienced, did not see it that way. He had been developing an interest in career education; the project seemed like a good chance to encourage career education in the district. Lacotti offered to share the management of the project with Spender.

After discussing the matter with Waller, the CEPD coordinator, Spender advised the superintendent to accept the project. Waller and Spender agreed that for five thousand dollars the project must be located in one small school to have any noticeable effect. And, although they were aware the project was meant to develop a problem-solving process applicable to a range of problems, they thought of it mainly as a way of bringing career education products into the district. It was in this manner that they described the project to Elaine Sargent, principal of the Charles School. Both she and her staff expressed interest, and four teachers volunteered to participate in the project.

SETTING A STRATEGY

The problem-solving process followed in Treeline was far from that envisioned by those who planned the project. During February and March the three administrators had only desultory contacts with any of the staff at the Charles School. Nor did they carry out any sort of formal needs assessment. Instead, Waller met informally with the two site coordinators, Spender and Lacotti, to discuss the district's career education problems and come to a consensus on what should be done at the Charles School.

Since assuming the role of CEPD coordinator, Waller had become increasingly committed to the concept of career education. He wished to get as many of the district's teachers as possible to share his feelings, and felt that the way to do this was to start a number of different activities at different grade levels throughout the district. Lacotti, the high school counselor, shared Waller's vision of gradual, cumulative change in the district. Both felt that the staff at Charles might not be aware of the district's needs as a whole, and thus should not be involved until later in the process. Besides, they felt involvement in determining needs and assessing problems would have been burdensome to the teachers.

After discussing the project among themselves, Waller, Lacotti, and Spender agreed that the broad aim of the project would be the infusion of career education content and principles into the elementary curriculum district-wide. The problem in the Charles School was to set up a cadre of teachers trained in career education who could share their experiences with others; in this way they would develop a workable model that could be extended to other schools in the district. In the meantime, though, the three would try to maintain a low profile, so as to avoid the political battles and bureaucratic delays that often accompanied major innovations in the district. They realized that there was no widespread sense of urgency among educators in the district to implement a career education program. Furthermore, since the district had recently recovered from a period of turbulent social and educational change, most teachers wanted simply to be left alone to teach and run the schools. The general feeling was that this was a time for retrenchment and concentration on "basics."

The field agent and the two site coordinators then began to look for information on promising career education materials, a task which proved to be much more difficult than identifying the problem. The state was supposed to have information concerning R&D products, in the form of product descriptions, available on request. However, the office responsible was unprepared; thus Waller, Lacotti, and Spender had to get most of the information on their own from other sources. But during February and March they managed to accumulate a fairly large number of products, product descriptions, catalogues, and related information. After reviewing the ones that were unfamiliar, they selected 10 for review by the teachers who would be implementing the products. As with problem identification, their rationale was that their prior review would minimize the burden on the teachers. However, the three administrators also felt that they had a better perspective on what would be appropriate than did the teachers.

THE PROCESS IS DEMOCRATIZED

A site team involving the teachers was finally formed in April, although theoretically it should have been active from the beginning. At its core were the four teachers who had volunteered for the project: Gladys Heath, Joan Bloom, Barbara Allen, and Susan Ferwald. Gladys Heath, perhaps the most active of them as a proponent of career education, was named team leader. Other members were Waller, Spender, Lacotti, Principal Sargent, and two parent representatives.

Principal Sargent was not an active member of the group. A nonintrusive administrator, she kept informed about the group's progress but attended few meetings. The parents were more active at first. After a few weeks of product reviews, however, they quickly began to lose interest; within two months both had dropped out. Waller, who attended those initial meetings, felt that the parents were intimidated by the professional educators and their "lingo." He said that they were asked to be involved "at the wrong point--materials review and selection--rather than problem identification and needs assessment, which would have been more interesting to them."

Both Waller and Lacotti felt that defining a role for parents was a weakness in the Treeline project. There was a feeling that the project was too small, and demands on their time too great, to make it worth using a lot of energy to keep parents involved. As Lacotti said, "To really get parents involved you have to follow up initiatives, telephone, encourage, arrange meeting times to meet their schedules... basically, I just had too many other things to do to make an effort here."

During the period from April through July the site team met occasionally as a whole, but more frequently in subgroups, to discuss and sift through the products selected by Waller, Spender, and Lacotti. The basic criteria established by the whole group for selecting or eliminating products were that they be (1) affordable, (2) reproducible, (3) without sex or racial bias, (4) requiring no special equipment, (5) easy for teachers to master immediately, and (6) comprehensive, covering not only the world of work, but self-awareness, values, and self-concepts.

During the spring of 1977 the site team met with representatives for a few of the products selected for review. The teachers present (not always the whole team) found that these personal presentations did not always enhance a product's appeal, yet one product finally selected was chosen in spite of a particularly poor presentation. Along with the formal criteria for evaluating products, the teachers brought their own personal feelings and past experiences to bear on the selection process. A few of the products were rejected as "difficult for teachers" and "inappropriate for our children."

An informal process of product review continued throughout the life of the project. Product fact sheets and brochures kept reaching Waller and Lacotti, who would pass them on to the teachers at Charles. In December 1978 Gladys Heath commented that she had just learned of a few products that she would like to use later in 1979. It is possible, then, that one of the weaknesses of the project--the failure of the state to get information on products to site teams on time--serendipitously turned out to be a blessing in Treeline.

Other problems besides the state's delay in sending out product descriptions affected the selection process. There was insufficient money to pay for release time for teachers to observe products in actual use; and it was hard to judge products from their descriptions. Gladys Heath, at least, felt that dialogue with other districts concerning their experiences with various products would have been useful. Still, by the summer of 1977 the site team had chosen three products for implementation that fall:

1. The Comprehensive Career Education Model (K-6) developed at Ohio State. Its 24 teaching units could be used to infuse career education into the teaching of academic subjects, such as language arts, math, social studies, and earth science.

2. Guidance Associates Early Elementary Films (K-6). The 30 films covered such topics as occupational choices, self-image, values, and decision making.

3. Society of Visual Education materials (K-4), a multi-media product with games, films, posters, and work cards.

The three products balanced each other in terms of content, mode of delivery, grade appropriateness, and degree of structure; of the three, the Ohio State product was by far the most structured.

As the fall approached, the site team turned its attention to evaluation and training. It was decided to pre- and post-test the students using the Elementary Career Orientation Battery developed by New Educational Directions (in Indiana). However, the only formal training that occurred was during a September dinner party attended by the teachers, the principal, the three administrators, and a few parents. During the evening the use of the products was apparently discussed in some detail.

When asked about the lack of training for implementation, Waller noted that the materials selected were basically self-explanatory, with guides and objectives laid out. He said that the teachers were professionals "who knew what they were doing. We didn't want to ram anything down anybody's throats. We exposed teachers to the materials, they knew the materials were available for them to use." Also suggested as a reason by Lacotti was lack of inservice time and resources to work with the teachers in a training activity.

The project leaders definitely set the tone for implementation of the products by their general philosophy of giving teachers freedom to implement as the teachers saw fit. Training would have been an area where some structure--a timetable, a set of expectations, even some formal guidelines--could most logically have been given to implementation. But this was not done, and the tone set by the project leaders was to have a significant effect on the nature of implementation.

FOUR TEACHERS, FOUR APPROACHES

The use of the three products by the site team teachers during the 1977-78 school year was considered to be a field trial of the products. Each of the teachers knew by the end of a couple of months if the products would serve her needs. Thus, the way that each product was used over the course of the year varied widely from teacher to teacher.

Gladys Heath's class was distinctive, being a multi-grade, open classroom setting. Bloom, Allen, and Ferwald all taught in more conventionally structured classrooms. All four teachers used the same overall approach to the career education products, that of infusion; thus the filmstrips, workbooks, mini-units, and discussions were integrated into the regular day-to-day curriculum. According to Lacotti and Heath, certain elements of all three products required "a specific way of implementing" which made it difficult to infuse these elements into the standard curriculum. The infusion approach also made it difficult to go in on any one day and see a product in use, according to Lacotti.

Susan Ferwald used the materials from the products in a very structured manner, but the other teachers implemented the products piecemeal and adapted them extensively to meet their needs. Even the content of some units (for example in the Ohio State product) was modified substantially at times. Since no pressure was placed on the teachers to use the materials in any particular manner, they tended to pick and choose from among the products, using them as anthologies of ideas or as brainstorming devices.

Barbara Allen, for one, hardly saw the products as central. She described her project activities during the 1977-78 school year in terms of the general career education activities in her classroom. She mentioned inviting parents in to talk about their jobs, settings up a school post office, visiting a local newspaper, and putting together a class newspaper. In her account, the project had acted as a catalyst in enhancing general career education activities in the Charles School, in addition to bringing in the commercial products.

Meanwhile, none of the administrators devoted much attention to the project after implementation began. Waller saw his role as long-range planner and decision maker, and restricted himself to passing on product descriptions as they arrived from the state. Spender dropped out of the project entirely in November, as his responsibilities to coordinate Treeline's vocational program expanded. Lacotti, the former high school counselor, had been appointed Career Education Director for the district. He was in the best position to motivate teachers and keep commitment high, but he was busy with his other responsibilities and did not wish to be intrusive. And Elaine Sargent, the principal, left the teachers to their own devices during the 1977-78 school year.

Not that the four teachers were completely isolated: both Waller and Lacotti were in touch with them informally during the year, and the teachers said that they felt the two of them were very supportive. Nonetheless, Lacotti felt that he had not devoted enough energy to keeping the teachers involved, for example by arranging for release time for teachers to continue reviewing materials.

The site team as a formal group was relatively inactive during the 1977-78 school year. Gladys Heath, head of the site team, said she was involved in a number of other activities and thus had almost no time to organize meetings. Although the four teachers were all in the same building and thus could talk over problems, at least one wished there had been more formal communication among project participants during the year. All the project participants did meet in the spring of 1978 to discuss plans for the 1978-79 school year, but Waller and Lacotti again set the year's goals.

Perhaps because of the lack of monitoring and formal communication, Allen and Bloom began to use the materials less and less during the winter and spring. Other innovative projects in the building began to claim the attention of all the team members. A major language arts program had been introduced, a new science curriculum was being implemented, and a general push was on to upgrade all curricula. Since the career education project was less central than these other curricular concerns, it received relatively less teacher attention.

GETTING REORGANIZED

The slowly unraveling career education project was dealt a further blow in the summer of 1978, when Bloom and Allen both took teaching jobs elsewhere in the state. Waller and Lacotti's plans for the fall had been for the site team to proselytize. The idea was to have the team members conduct inservice training sessions in the district's other schools, presenting the career education products and the idea of career infusion. With half of their missionaries gone, the team had to regroup; a meeting was called for September 1978.

At the meeting Principal Sargent addressed the issue of piecemeal, weak implementation of the products, saying that she would like to see more structure in implementation, and that it was her responsibility to see that this took place. This was the first time she had taken an active stance in the project, although she was obviously aware of the implementation problems. Waller and Lacotti were pleased by her increased commitment. It proved, they later maintained, that their low-key, no-pressure approach during the first year had been successful, since Sargent was the natural leader in the Charles School and knew best when pressure could and should be applied.

The site team meeting had several results. Two new teachers were chosen for the team. They were both interested in career education but had not been part of the project. Timetables were set up for the proselytizing activities of the two experienced members of the team, Heath and Ferwald. The first of these activities would be a trip to a neighboring school district to share experiences and exchange career education materials. The team also reviewed the inconclusive evaluation results from the previous year.

During the following months, the two new teachers became familiar with the three products, as well as several new ones, and began to infuse them into their classes. Heath and Ferwald visited the nearby district in October. Members of the team reviewed new product descriptions as they arrived.

By December, however, no second meeting of the site team had taken place, and no further inservice activities had occurred. The various other change efforts going on in the school were still claiming much of the teachers' energies, funds were still limited, and the district administration was generally unaware of the project. The problem it addressed--infusion of career education materials into the curriculum--seemed less pressing in comparison to other issues. Though Waller, Lacotti, and the individual teachers no doubt would pursue their interest in career education, it was unlikely that the goal of infusing career education into the curriculum throughout the district would be realized.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) Apply each of the beliefs about what is of primary importance in accounting for school change to Charles Elementary School. Which belief seems to be most significant in explaining the lack of success in this case? Could it have been the individual personalities of Spender and Waller? Perhaps Charles Elementary or the Treeline district as organizations were most important. Finally, could the lack of long-term impact be traced most directly to the conservative superintendent and community, rapid influx of disadvantaged students, or other elements in the school context?

(2) This case has been another reminder that schools operate in and must adapt to an ever-changing environment in order to operate effectively. What are some organizational characteristics that denote the more adaptable organizations versus those which adapt less successfully? Use the school described in this case as the starting point for your analysis.

(3) As happened in this case, parents and other community groups are often included in school decision-making groups. What dangers does such representation have to the schools? To the community representatives?

(4) The use of the three products varied widely among the four implementing teachers, although they all aimed at integrating career education into their regular day-to-day curriculum. Discuss the significance of the variation in approach to product implementation. What could have been done to reduce variation?

(5) The strategy adopted by Waller, Spender, and Lacotti was to keep a low profile and introduce change very gradually, relying on a small cadre of teachers to establish a foothold for career education in the district. What was their rationale for adopting this stragegy? What would you have done in the same situation?

PART 4

READINESS AND CONTINGENCIES

CHAPTER 11

JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Elliott Krause

The Jefferson School provides an example of what can be done to introduce an innovation successfully under what might look, at first, to be very difficult conditions: scarce resources, an anti-education working-class community, and growing alienation between teachers and district administration. When the district's teachers carried out and lost a long and ugly strike at the beginning of the implementation year, Jefferson's principal lost all credit with the central office by siding with teachers. Finally, the hostility of the community towards the teachers increased following the strike action. But rather than hampering the innovation, these conditions led to a school-against-the-world unity of teachers and principal that actually saved the new program, despite the tremendous teacher effort it required.

Jefferson, a town of approximately 19,000 people, was located midway between and about 30 miles from two New England cities. Founded more than 200 years ago as a farming village, Jefferson became a mill town in the mid-nineteenth century. Poor Italians and French-Canadians flocked to this Yankee enclave looking for jobs in the mills. Those who settled eventually became a force in local politics.

With the onset of the industrial growth of the South, much of Jefferson's industry was drawn away. High unemployment became the town's biggest problem. In 1977, unemployment was estimated officially at 7.4 percent, though some observers felt the actual figure might be in the range of 10 to 15 percent of the employable population.

At the time of the change effort in Jefferson School, the town was primarily a mix of older Yankee families and second-generation Italians and French-Canadians. Neither group had much wealth, and the Italians and French-Canadians were referred to by one (Yankee) respondent as "failed ethnics," since they had not been financially successful enough to move up and out into the suburbs of the nearby cities. Jefferson itself had an insular quality: none of the townspeople regarded Jefferson as a suburb or the outskirts of any city. One long-time resident, a retired city planning engineer, summed it up this way:

> The town thinks of itself as itself, period. Even for major shopping people don't go to the cities but to nearby larger towns. A few mills are left, and a few small sweat-shops, but no new space technology or electronics. Any further drop in the economy will absolutely kill this town.

The municipal government was extremely conservative politically and very tight on public spending. School administrators were quite aware that a rise in the tax rate would be hard to bear in this town, which was not rich in resources. Furthermore, education was not a top priority. As one local put it,

> The town ethos is anti-education and anti-intellectual and anti-school. They urge their kids to go quickly into unskilled employment, have not the patience or the trust in the money reward of education, and they point to unemployment among high school graduates as a reason for dropping out. There is a small professional class which works against the tide, but is not loud or vociferous and has no power in town.

THE JEFFERSON SCHOOL

In addition to the junior highs and high school, there were nine elementary schools in Jefferson in 1977-78. The Jefferson School was completed about 1900, in the square, two-storied shape so very familiar to those who have seen small elementary schools of this vintage. In 1975 Superintendent John Bono decided to remodel the Jefferson School; old walls were torn down to create open areas for "open education." The change to an open structure disturbed the staff and the community, neither of whom had been consulted beforehand. Although workshops and inservice activities were held to help staff and students adjust, problems with noise and lack of privacy continued to be an issue for years after the remodeling.

Jefferson School's administrative structure was simple; there was a principal, Sam Porter, one full-time secretary, a small special education staff, a full-time nurse, the teachers, and the custodian. Until 1978 Principal Porter also administered two extremely small schools in town in addition to the Jefferson School. They were closed in the fall of that year, and students and teachers were reassigned to Jefferson or to other schools in the district.

In 1976 some 600 students attended Jefferson School (grades one to six) and the two smaller schools (grades one to four). The Jefferson students one saw in classrooms and in hallways seemed, on the whole, to be quiet, well-dressed, and lively. According to Porter, the students typically came from a socioeconomic background lower than the town's average; thus, many were from unskilled working class families (only 30 students were AFDC recipients). In staff meetings, teachers occasionally discussed some common, and relatively minor, discipline problems, such as toilet-stuffing and gambling. In general, though, the children could be seen talking happily with teachers in the lunchroom, and a sense of regimentation was not in evidence.

In 1976 there were 18 teachers in the Jefferson School and 7 in the two smaller schools. Although they seemed highly motivated to teach and to teach well, they were not a very cosmopolitan group professionally. Many were married to locals and lived in or near the town; almost none commuted from the nearby major cities or their suburbs.

In general, the school climate was one of relaxed mutual support. The principal, office secretary, teachers, students, and special support staff were on first-name terms and seemed comfortable whether they were kidding one another or working. Sam Porter was a likeable, stocky, outgoing guy. His warm personality endeared him to his staff, most of whom were female. During staff meetings and in informal conversations the teachers were able to disagree with him openly, as well as to ask his help on special problems.

Nevertheless, the Jefferson School had certain problems. One was its reputation for producing less capable students. Some residents of Jefferson attributed this to the below-average socioeconomic background of the students' families. Others pointed to the open-classroom architecture as the main cause of indiscipline and diminished learning.

The school's reputation did little for teacher morale. When the walls came down and problems with noise and discipline increased, morale sagged still further, to the point where the principal became quite concerned. Even so, in the warm atmosphere of the school, staff members could generally get the support they needed from one another.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

Not far from the Jefferson school district was a private, non-profit research and service organization which did consulting with local education agencies as well as research for the federal government. The Jefferson school district had dealt with this agency on several occasions. In 1974 an assistant superintendent had arranged for it to train a number of district administrators for progressive work in education. During the 1975-76 school year, the school system, with help from the agency, undertook a search for a new reading program to be adopted district-wide. The principals favored the Wisconsin Design for Reading; Superintendent Bono approved of their choice and arranged for the research and service agency to train teachers in its use.

The superintendent scheduled training in the Wisconsin Design for the summer of 1976, with implementation at all the town's elementary schools to follow in September. He then learned from the research and service agency about a new, federally funded project to assist schools in finding and implementing research-based solutions to school problems in reading. The agency would employ a field agent (called a "linking agent") to help the schools carry out the required project procedures. On the one hand, this new project was attractive, since it would provide extra money for training the teachers in one of the district's schools. On the other hand, the first year of the project had to be devoted to identifying a problem and reviewing various possible solutions; during that year no reading program could be implemented. If the school finally decided that the Wisconsin Design for Reading was the solution for its reading problem, well and good: implementation at that school would merely have been delayed for a year. But if the school should choose some other solution, the superintendent would not have the all-Wisconsin Design district he wanted.

After weighing the pros and cons, Superintendent Bono decided to apply for the project. He chose Jefferson School as the project site and informed Principal Porter, telling him that his teachers should still receive Wisconsin Design training that summer in case the new project fell through.

PROJECT ENTRY

Soon after the summer training, the district received word that the Jefferson School had been chosen to participate in the new, federally funded project. The school's teachers were discomfited when they learned their training had been in vain. This episode, so reminiscent of the superintendent's unilateral decision to remodel the school, contributed to his growing reputation for high-handedness.

In order to lay the groundwork for Jefferson's entry into the project, Lauren Hartwell, the project's field agent, met with the superintendent during the first week of September. As a sign of his commitment to the project, Superintendent Bono designated the new district reading coordinator as his representative to the school's decision-making team. He also promised to arrange for release time for the teachers who would be involved.

Later that week, Hartwell met with Principal Porter and with the reading specialist for the school. She also made a presentation to the entire faculty, explaining the project and how they could become involved. In mid-September, following a short presentation to the board of education by the superintendent, the principal, and the reading coordinator, the board agreed to participate in the program. Hartwell now had a formal mandate for her work in the Jefferson School.

One of Hartwell's first tasks was to create a "decision-making group," or DMG, to serve as a bridge between herself and the school. During the 1976-77 school year it would identify problems in the school's reading program, review the innovative reading programs available for adoption, and decide on one for use in Jefferson. Once that decision was made, the DMG would remain in existence during the first two years of implementation as a project monitoring group.

Early in October 1976 Hartwell and Porter conferred on the makeup of the group. The district reading coordinator would represent the superintendent; three teachers and the school reading specialist would represent the faculty. Parents were to be represented also. This requirement fit well with the principal's own policy of involving parents in school programs. One parent, an active member of the Title I Parent Advisory Group, was appointed to the DMG by Principal Porter. The other parent representative volunteered after reading about the DMG in the newspaper.

The two parents did not have the antipathy toward education which was more typical of Jefferson residents. Both were wealthier than the Jefferson School norm. They were motivated by the desire to improve the quality of education their children were receiving at Jefferson. Although the parents were to miss about half of the DMG meetings--sometimes because they did not receive adequate notice--they participated actively when they were present. One in particular made her home available for dinners and open-house meetings.

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

Hartwell's role during the rest of the 1976-77 school year was to work with the DMG in identifying problems with the school's reading program, developing selection criteria for any new program, reviewing a series of potential reading innovations in light of these criteria, and then choosing the best one. At the first DMG meeting, early in November, the group talked about ways of involving parents and teachers as much as possible. It was decided to survey teachers and parents on their reading concerns. Discussion then turned to people's ideas of the most important need in the area of reading. Many of those present mentioned the need for some kind of sequential skill development.

In succeeding weeks, the group prepared and distributed surveys of teachers and parents and then analyzed the results. Cheered by the satisfying response rate and the rapid pace of progress so far, the group took up the next item on the agenda: drafting a statement of the problem.

The process suddenly slowed to a crawl. Hartwell was convinced that the choice of a product must be based on a clear problem definition on which all of the members of the DMG could agree. In her view, a false premise was unlikely to lead to a true conclusion; hence the importance of identifying the precise nature of the reading problem in Jefferson School. Hartwell was sensitive to the fact that consensus did not exist on any definition of the problem, but that group members were willing to claim they agreed in order to avoid conflict. Uppermost on their minds was to get on with choosing some product.

For three long meetings the DMG grappled with problem identification. Whenever Hartwell detected differences of opinion, she would state what she thought was the source of the difficulty and invite discussion. Though the group members found this frustrating at first, eventually they were able to agree that the underlying cause of the students' various reading problems was the lack of continuity in the language arts curriculum. To celebrate this achievement, Hartwell broke out a bottle of wine and shared it with the group. Though she was generally a serious--almost prim--person, such demonstrations of her genuine interest in the group helped her to establish warm personal bonds with the teachers at Jefferson School.

THE POLITICS OF PRODUCT SELECTION

Following the problem identification phase, the DMG drew up a list of criteria by which to judge the various products they would be considering. This time consensus was achieved easily. To be chosen, a product must serve grades one to six, present material sequentially, allow student progress to be recorded, and permit students to enter at their own level of ability. In view of the poor town-school relationship in Jefferson, it was judged important that the product allow for effective communication with parents about their children's strengths and weaknesses. Finally, the product must also involve teacher training.

A list of 30 products was quickly narrowed down to eight, and then to three: Andover Individualized Reading System (AIRS), the Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction (ECRI) program, and Wisconsin Design for Reading. In January, the DMG presented these three finalists to the entire faculty for their consideration. As the DMG had half-expected, the faculty reacted with outrage and charges that they were being manipulated.

After all, the political overtones were obvious: the Wisconsin Design for Reading was the "superintendent's choice." Choosing Wisconsin Design would certainly make it easier for teachers to transfer to the town's other schools, but it would also please the unpopular superintendent. Rejecting Wisconsin Design, even for the best of pedagogic reasons, might be interpreted as a slap in his face. Hartwell discussed these issues with the DMG during February, as the group reviewed filmstrips, tapes, texts, and materials from the three programs.

Hartwell did not like the ECRI program and privately remarked that she would not want her own child in an ECRI class. Even so, she assumed a professional neutrality toward the program and pushed for a fair consideration of it, even when the teachers appeared not to be impressed by the written descriptions of ECRI. In March DMG members visited schools that had implemented the three programs. Once the vistors had seen the enthusiasm of children and teachers using ECRI, opposition almost vanished. The DMG was nearly unanimous in recommending ECRI to the full faculty, and the faculty was quick to approve the DMG's choice.

Seventeen teachers out of 25 in Jefferson School chose to participate in the ECRI program and signed up to be trained at the end of August. They were paid a small honorarium, $40 per day, for the one-week session. The 17 teachers were trained by staff from the center in Utah that had developed the ECRI teaching techniques. The five days of training were intensive, packed with information, and consequently somewhat anxiety-producing. In general, the teachers felt that the training was merely an *introduction* to the ECRI techniques. This was to cause problems with implementation, since Hartwell was not a reading expert, and experienced ECRI trainers were to visit the school only a few times later in the year. But shortly after the teachers' training and the return to school, there was a more dramatic potential setback: the teachers' strike.

THE JEFFERSON TEACHERS' STRIKE

Given the town's attitude toward education, especially the financing of it, the implications for teacher salaries were clear. Furthermore, the superintendent's heavy-handed administrative style and a continuing decline in enrollment were inevitably leading to the firing of some teachers and the relocation of others. More immediate causes of the strike were, first, the town's refusal to give the teachers even a cost of living increase--in a time when inflation was running a minimum of seven percent a year--and, second, the town's additional refusal to give the teachers a contract.

A strike had been brewing thoroughout the summer of 1977. As school began, the main thing on everyone's mind was the breakdown in negotiations and the impending strike. Teachers were afraid that it would last a long time and that their jobs would be jeopardized. Some teachers claimed that the tense situation was not yet affecting ECRI; they were trying the program and having good results. Others, however, resisted making the extra effort required by ECRI at a time when they were working without a contract.

Once the strike started, it made the headlines and the evening newscasts statewide. The school board, representing the interests of the town, took the teachers to court. The principals, who acted as mediators, spent eight days in the courthouse trying to get the board and teachers to compromise. Both the town and the teachers were intransigent. Finally, a state superior court judge ordered the teachers back to work. First teachers were fined, then several were jailed, until the teachers complied with the order. The strike, "won" by the town, was over by September 30, 1977.

Two facts are of critical importance in contrasting the Jefferson School and others in the town. The first is that the teachers of the Jefferson School were more cohesive in their support of the strike than were teachers in other schools. Secondly, of all the principals in the system, Sam Porter, principal of the Jefferson School, was most supportive of his teachers.

Porter had been sympathetic to teachers' grievances throughout the 1976-77 school year. When the strike began, he organized the principals to try to mediate the dispute. Since he had for years been primary bargainer for the town's principals, he felt empathy for his teachers in their struggle.

Talking to Hartwell soon after the strike ended, Principal Porter expressed the hope that ECRI might become "a vehicle for getting things back to normal again." He said the strike had been especially devastating and exhausting for the principals, upon whom both sides had vented their anger and upset. However, teachers had shown their understanding for his rather difficult position, caught between the teachers, the central administration, and the school committee. After the strike, a dozen teachers showed up on his doorstep at 7:30 in the morning "and there was a lot of hugging." For her part, Hartwell presented the returning teachers with a bouquet of flowers, even though she worried about the gesture being too "gushy." The teachers, however, were touched by her concern.

The strike may very well have poisoned relationships within many schools in the system--between principal and staff, between striking and non-striking factions in a school faculty. Results were certainly meager: the school committee later gave the teachers a four percent raise. However, in the Jefferson School the strike produced even greater solidarity against the outside world. In the long run, the standing of the principal with the higher administration suffered, precisely because of his constructive attitude toward his own staff. As Principal Porter commented, "After this is over I expect to get flak from the superintendent for some time to come."

IMPLEMENTING THE ECRI PROGRAM

ECRI did become a focus for getting back to business in the Jefferson School, and in effect also acted as a kind of occupational therapy. It gave everyone something besides the strike to talk about and also to complain about: two to four extra hours per day were needed to prepare the handwritten charts used in the program. Two and a half months into the innovation, Porter noted that some favorable comments concerning ECRI were among the few positive things parents had to say about the schools. Asked what the parents thought about ECRI, he replied:

> The speed, the words per minute that they read--parents want to know why the stopwatches. I get nice comments. They are seeing better hand-writing and reading, and I get comments like "My kid wants to spell and read at home." Also, I have a local grocer who always wants to comment on the school--he doesn't like the walls, he doesn't like this, that, you know--now he doesn't want his kids transferred out of the school, now that it has ECRI.

ECRI is a method of basic instruction in reading based on the theories of B.F. Skinner. It stresses teacher "behaviors" that are calculated to improve students' reading. Part of the time students recite as a group, as in this exchange between a teacher and student at Jefferson:

> Teacher: You will learn to read a new word by adding *ed*. The word is *stack*.
>
> Kids (in unison): Stack!
>
> Teacher: Sound *ed* as in T, Sound!
>
> Kids: T!
>
> Teacher: The new word is...
>
> Kids: Stacked!

The children at Jefferson tended to enjoy reading and spelling out loud. However, at other times they were supposed to work silently at their own pace. The students often paid little attention to these tasks, and teachers had to spend a lot of time keeping them focused. Applying the program's techniques--eliciting responses, instant diagnosis and prescription, positive reinforcement--was also tiring, especially at first. And the workday was not over when the teacher went home; there were still cards and charts of pupil progress to be prepared.

Teachers varied in the extent to which they applied the program. Some may have misunderstood the thinking behind ECRI's "positive reinforcement" approach, even though the approach was calculated to be teacher-proof, that is, unspoilable by application on site. One sort of problem was trivial and mechanical application of the procedures. For example:

> (There is noise)
>
> Teacher: I like the people who are quiet and who let me speak to others. (In a slightly menacing tone) When you're quiet I *love* it, I *love* it! (She pounds on the desk.)

This is supposed to be discipline through positive reinforcement.

By December 1977 the program was well under way in the Jefferson School. With two-thirds of the teachers using ECRI, the rest of the faculty felt left out when conversation turned to the woes and joys of the new approach. In fact, because of the principal's strong support of ECRI, a few teachers began to view interest in the approach as a potential tool for job survival. When the announcement was made informally at midyear that Sam Porter had been appointed principal of a new, combined school and was planning an all-ECRI program, a few teachers who were not using ECRI felt twinges of panic.

Midway through the first implementation year, Jefferson ECRI teachers were asked to compare their experience of the program in its first month with the way they used it now. Among their responses were the following:

> I was overwhelmed by the work load in the beginning. My insecurity with the program initially was disconcerting. Now I have my workload under control, and I am quite confident with the ECRI methods.
>
> I feel more secure in the program at the present time, but there are many facets of the program to be ironed out. These are being done gradually, but I feel I am floundering.
>
> I feel more confident. I am more organized and have had time to prepare ahead so I don't feel so pressured with the required work load, which is quite heavy. I hope next year the work will be further reduced.
>
> I'm totally inundated with work, and confused. I feel better about it now, but have not fully mastered the daily schedule. I still feel that it consumes a lot of energy--the teacher feels sapped of energy if covering all fronts.
>
> I've come to enjoy using ECRI. I spend much less time in preparation now (approximately 1 hour per day) than during the first month (2-3 hours per day). I've become more proficient in the ECRI technique and now can incorporate creative writing skills in the program much more than before.

It is clear that ECRI made heavy time and energy demands on teachers. In a school with less committed teachers, this kind of demanding program might well have fallen flat on its face.

Also notable during this year was the changing role of the field agent. Hartwell was central to the action until ECRI was implemented, but she was not a reading expert herself and had only limited funds to hire reading experts to advise the teachers having problems. When she *did* invite experts she sat on the sidelines looking a little bored and puzzled, not sure what she could do to help.

The teachers noticed. Asked to describe the role of the field agent, all were generally positive but tended to say things like, "*Last* year she did this and that, but this year I'm not sure what she *does*." Indeed, Hartwell herself commented, "I find myself somewhat uncomfortable in these events. It's very like a cocktail party where I have to think up things to talk to people about. I'm not too good at that." During this time she was trying to cope with the changed role she now had in the program, much as parents have to change their role vis-a-vis their children as the children grow into teenagers; in the interim some confusion is inevitable.

The project kept going on its way, and by late February and early March Hartwell had established a new role for herself: program evaluator. She began working with the teachers and with Principal Porter on ways of evaluating the progress of the kids using the ECRI program. As repayment for the long, extra hours, teachers were hoping for improved student performance on reading tests, even though there is some evidence that this takes more than one year to happen. A second role for the field agent became that of planning with the DMG and with the principal for a second implementation year.

PLANNING AND EVALUATION

In February Porter put in a request to the central office for $1,950 to train new ECRI teachers in the summer of 1978 and to buy additional ECRI materials. A few weeks later, Principal Porter told the DMG: "We're going to have to fight real hard to get more money for training for next year." The superintendent's interest in ECRI had cooled considerably in the aftermath of the strike, and he was not enthusiastic about requesting funds from the school board.

By early March, the issues of who would be teaching where, and who would not have a job, were on everyone's mind. Most teachers had heard about all the extra work that ECRI involved, and that there were plans for an all-ECRI school. Nevertheless, the Jefferson School was one of the few possibilities for school positions, given recent school budget cutbacks. Hartwell and a principal of another school were planning to write a paper comparing the adoptions of ECRI and Wisconsin Design in the district. However, their project would involve interviewing teachers on their attitudes, and at least one teacher felt the interviews might be threatening and disruptive in the atmosphere of paranoia created by the past strike and impending reorganization. Hartwell decided to postpone the evaluation until April, when teachers had been reassigned. This would reduce the likelihood that people would say whatever put them in a good light.

In the middle of March 1978 at a parent-teacher open house, Principal Porter and teachers from the Jefferson School showed videotapes of the ECRI program in action. The 50 parents who had come to the open house were very approving, though the teachers' comments lacked some of the energy and enthusiasm they had shown earlier for ECRI. To one observer, they gave the impression that ECRI was pretty routine.

The superintendent did not approve Sam Porter's request for summer training funds; instead, the summer budget was to be $1000 for all the elementary schools. After learning this, Porter and Hartwell visited the superintendent in mid-May to ask for extra training money. Hartwell reacted to this visit with annoyance:

> The superintendent is always trying to get more money, and he never has enough money, and I don't believe that there is any commitment from the central office towards this program I think the teachers here have just really put themselves out in working to make this program go, and I see them getting very little encouragement or acknowledgement from the central office. Also, I feel a little ripped off, since I keep forcing more and more project money into the adoption, and they keep weaseling out of their share.

By the middle of May most of the meetings of the decision-making group were concerned with the nature of the evaluation, how complete the results needed to be, and what the school committee might want with them. They were beginning to be small rumbles of discord. For example, at the end of a meeting in mid-May, one person brought up the idea of dissolving the decision-making group. The other members responded to this suggestion with alarm, since to them the DMG was the program. Nevertheless, small indications of waning commitment appeared: half the teachers did not want to take one day in the second summer for advanced training, requesting instead a free day during the following school year.

In early June, the last big meeting was held, and Hartwell gave them the results from the evaluation of student performance. The results were mixed, which did nothing to restore the waning enthusiasm of the teachers. In general, the year ended with plans by most teachers to stay in Porter's all-ECRI school. Superintendent Bono showed little inclination to widen the adoption of the program beyond Jefferson School; and, in the other schools, the adoption of Wiscon Design had been met with lukewarm acceptance at best. "Given the chance, most of them would drop it tomorrow," noted the field agent.

THE SECOND IMPLEMENTATION YEAR

Reductions in force and the closing of the two small schools administered by Principal Porter caused a number of teacher transfers for the 1978-79 school year. Five teachers who had not yet used ECRI were given a week's training over the summer.

Some of the new teachers ran into problems implementing ECRI. The DMG attempted to identify these teachers and then to provide them with materials or other assistance as needed. The informal support networks among teachers and the more systematic assistance of the DMG were sufficient to resolve most implementation problems in the first month of school.

The parents on the DMG also attempted to address the teachers' need for more assistance in the classroom during ECRI instruction. They recruited parent volunteers in unprecedented numbers (around 25) to assist teachers with the ECRI program. Parents helped make materials and served as aides in the classroom during activities such as testing which require more adult supervision than one teacher can provide.

Three changes that fall were welcomed by teachers. Temporary walls were finally installed in the open classrooms, thus cutting down on the noise from oral recitation and giving the teachers a place to hang their charts of student progress. Also, in November, Bono left the district to assume a new superintendency.

The greatest boon to teachers was the discovery of "short cuts" in ECRI that reduced the workload to some extent. The ECRI trainers who provided supplementary training were more lenient than the trainers from the year before and allowed more revisions in the ECRI method. Although the Jefferson School teachers maintained what they called a "doctrinaire" approach, many scheduled fewer tests and individual conferences with students.

After the first month's effort to help teachers new to ECRI, the teacher representatives on the DMG turned their attention to disseminating information about the program. Faculty members attended conferences in various parts of the state, making presentations about their experiences with the federally funded project. The parent members, in contrast, found themselves less useful than in the two preceding years and participated in only a few meetings. As the year ended, one parent announced she was leaving the group for good.

RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

The reading program improvement effort in the Jefferson School is a clear case of successful implementation of an educational innovation. The almost textbook manner in which the original year's work was carried out was threatened by the strike; however, the Jefferson School was much more socially integrated than the majority of schools in the town, and withstood the strain of the strike as a cohesive unit. Since the principal was strongly identified with ECRI and known to be at odds with his own superintendent, the school-against-the-world unity of the Jefferson School saved the program. Yet that same adversarial relationship with the upper administration contributed to the containment of the innovation, despite the hard work of the teachers and the successful implementation of ECRI. Whether a new superintendent would find ECRI worthy of introduction at other district schools remained to be seen.

The ECRI approach had its drawbacks: it was exhausting, at least at first, for teachers, and had the potential to become boring for both teachers and students. Nevertheless, its implementation at the Jefferson School appeared to have had a number of positive effects. One was increased parent involvement, starting with parent representation on the DMG and continuing with parent volunteer help in the classroom. This achievement was notable, given the hostility of the community to its schools.

Lessening of hostility was largely attributable to the improvement noted by many parents in their children's spelling, handwriting, and reading habits. (Some credit would also have to be given to the open houses for parents, held in the first and second years of implementation, and to articles in the newspaper, which appeared several times a year.) Moreover, the junior high school teachers were finding that incoming Jefferson students had above average skills in spelling and handwriting. As word spread, the school's reputation in the community was beginning to improve.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) The Jefferson project operated under incredible handicaps, e.g., penny-pinching community, teachers' strike, poor relations with the district office, etc. Nevertheless, its reading improvement program worked. What were the key factors in Jefferson's success?

(2) An external resource person in a school change effort has a difficult job. This person must help the staff to clarify and solve educational problems while maintaining a profile low enough to encourage local ownership of the process and product. Was the field agent in this case effective? Why? Contrast her strategies and tactics with those used by the field agent for Bell Elementary.

(3) Suppose you had been Principal Porter at the time the teachers called their strike. Would you have sided with the teachers, shown allegiance to the district, or taken an even-handed approach? What are the pros and cons of each alternative?

(4) Whether to focus on utilizing a rational problem-solving process, on adopting a suitable educational product, or on some combination of the two is often a dilemma in school change programs. The Jefferson teachers were impatient with the slow process of defining a problem because they wanted to get on with choosing a product. Why do you think that this push to product selection occurs? How important is it to refine the problem statement before dealing with solution selection?

(5) Identify what you consider to be the major "turning point" in this case, i.e., the event or circumstance that made the difference between success and failure.

CHAPTER 12

OGDEN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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A poor school climate stood in the way of innovation at Ogden Junior High, even though most teachers agreed that something needed to be done to help the school's low-achieving students. The main problem was that half of Ogden's students were reading at least two grades below grade level and could not comprehend their study assignments. Despite the obvious urgency of this situation, the teachers were too discouraged by the school's poor teaching conditions, and by what they perceived as the uncaring attitude of the district, to make any great changes on their own initiative.

With the help of an external change agent, these barriers were overcome, and a program to teach reading in the content areas was adopted. New obstacles then arose in the form of increased bad feelings toward the administration during negotiation of the teachers' contract and toward the school's reading program coordinator, who was seen as an ally of the administration. Nonetheless, still other critical events helped heal the divisions among the staff and breathed new life into the change effort. To explain how this came about, it is necessary to say something about Ogden's early history and the conditions in the school district when Ogden was constructed.

Midland, where Ogden Junior High was located, was a large western city. Its economy was balanced, offering employment in the retail trades, government service, manufacturing, timber, and construction. But if the city's economy was generally healthy, its school system was not. Midland school district, already hampered by a declining fiscal base, was jolted by the failure of a tax levy in 1972.

One of the first schools to suffer was Ogden, then under construction. To save money, district officials ordered several alterations in the building design and cut back on the school's equipment and supplies. As a result, the first day of school in the fall of 1973 was chaotic, and the 1,050 students packed into too few classrooms had to share scarce materials. Conditions hardly improved that year; Ogden's teachers came to realize that the central administration was leaving them to fend for themselves. The teachers began to call Ogden the "stepchild" of the district. The hostility toward the district which Ogden's teachers developed so early in the school's history maintained itself over the years.

Ogden had been designed as an open education school. Since the school was swamped with students, many of whom were of low socioeconomic status, the open education plan soon proved to be a failure. The school developed a reputation for being educationally poor, and as a result the worst students in the district were often sent there. By 1976 shrinking enrollments had brought the number of students down to 850 and had reduced classroom crowding;

nevertheless, the new principal ordered a change to the traditional classroom format.

More than that would have to be done to solve the school's problems. Tests given to all students in September 1976 showed that half of Ogden's students were reading at least two grades below grade level. Most of the school's 40 teachers had redesigned their lessons to take into account their students' low reading ability, but the students seemed unmotivated and responded with little enthusiasm. Although two special reading programs existed at the school, they served too few students to make much of a difference.

If the teachers at Ogden had expected any help from the district administration, they were disappointed. Since 1973 the district had been considering revisions to the curriculum of its schools, but results were limited. In that year the superintendent of schools had charged Jean Napier, the district reading consultant, with the responsibility of revising the district's reading program. She organized committees of teachers and administrators and worked with them until the spring of 1974; at that time, she presented the committees' proposals to the district administration. The administration rejected the plan for the secondary schools. Napier then formed a new committee which, in late 1974, submitted a new plan. It called for volunteer teachers from each junior and senior high to attend workshops where they would be trained in reading in the content areas. These teachers would then return to their buildings to train members of their departments.

Although this plan was accepted by the district administration, only one workshop was held during the 1975-76 school year. Negotiations with the teachers' union were coming up, and administrators wanted to avoid the touchy issue of inservice time. There was little pressure from secondary teachers to implement the plan, since they would not be reimbursed for the time they devoted to training or being trained. In the spring of 1976 it was further decided to organize reading committees in each junior and senior high school to oversee the in-school training. But the political situation in the district continued the same, slowing the process of improving the reading curriculum in Ogden and the other secondary schools.

A STIMULUS FOR CHANGE

That June word reached the district of a new project to help schools select validated educational products to solve school problems. Bernadette Wynn, the project's field agent, was located in one of the state's intermediate service districts. In August she met with an assistant superintendent for the Midland school district and with Jean Napier, the reading consultant, to explain the project and answer questions. Both the assistant superintendent and Napier were quite interested in the problem-solving process described by the field agent. This, more than the possibility of finding a product to match their needs, influenced them to recommend the project to their superiors.

The Midland district personnel felt that the project should be directed at the junior high school level and should focus on reading in the content areas. They saw no conflict with the already existing district reading project; the decision making group (DMG) required for the RDU project would simply replace the reading committee in the school chosen. Jean Napier was chosen as contact person in the district, and she set about organizing a meeting with all seven junior high school principals in order to choose a site school.

Bernadette Wynn and Jean Napier met with the principals in late September. Though the principals were interested in the project, they wanted to know how much time would be required of teachers. Wynn explained that she could not give a specific answer to this question. With contract negotiations still ongoing, five of the seven principals expressed unwillingness to impose a time-consuming activity on their teachers.

In the following weeks, the reading consultant conferred further with principals and settled on Ogden as the most likely candidate. Given the general mood at Ogden, it was not at all clear that the teachers would support the idea, so the field agent offered to meet with the Ogden faculty and conduct interviews to sound out their feelings. In mid-November Wynn interviewed 20 of the 38 staff members. She found the teachers skeptical about the support that might be obtained from the district administration and critical of their principal's leadership ability; yet they were well aware that Ogden needed some kind of reading program. The field agent concluded that the project had a good chance of success in Ogden.

THE PROJECT BEGINS

All the Ogden staff assembled in late November to learn what participation in the project would involve. After Bernadette Wynn explained the project's goals and procedures, Jean Napier pledged the district's support for the effort. Although the teachers expressed doubt that the district would actually support their efforts, they wanted to do something--anything--to solve the reading problem at the school. The vote to participate was unanimous. The Ogden principal then announced that three teachers had been selected for the DMG and asked for two more volunteers.

The first DMG meeting followed in two weeks' time. The tone of that meeting was enthusiastic. The participants, who included four teachers, the principal, the reading consultant, and the field agent, decided on a series of surveys to ascertain the feelings of teachers, parents, and students. The DMG agreed to meet again in January to discuss the results of the surveys.

The January meeting, a full-day workshop, was quite productive. After a review of survey results, work began on formulating a concise problem statement. Wynn distributed information on the problem-solving process and on the pool of R&D products available from the RDU project. At the group's February meeting, another full-day affair, members completed the problem statement, drafted a set of criteria for selecting R&D products, and spent a considerable amount of time discussing how to involve parents and students in the process.

The problems identified by the DMG included:

1. Student attitudes--"There is a lack of motivation, need for rewards, dependence on teachers."

2. Student abilities--"Students cannot follow directions, cannot get the main concept or idea, do not know what words mean, cannot express themselves effectively, cannot read well or spell."

3. Teacher involvement--"Teachers want to do something, but do not know what to do. They find it difficult to meet the wide range of student abilities. They cannot cover the necessary material in subject matter and work on reading skills as well."

4. Community-parent involvement--"There is none."

Between meetings, the teachers on the DMG made an effort to inform other teachers in their departments about the group's activities. Grade-level and departmental meetings were held at different points in the problem-solving process, despite a lack of effective support on the part of the principal.

After the February meeting, a student advisory group was established to represent student opinion. Although DMG members interviewed a number of parents to learn their views, no parent representatives ever joined the DMG; a few parents attended individual meetings. Thus, the goal of involving as many constituencies as possible was only partially achieved.

The DMG met once a month for the rest of the semester to review product descriptions and films. By April the group felt that two products, the Intensive Reading Improvement Program (IRIP) from Chicago and the Right to Read program in San Diego, best met its selection criteria. Both contributed to students' positive self-concept, involved materials that were stimulating and easily used, and provided for diagnosis of problems and appropriate instruction. Since both were suited for use in many content areas, they would involve as many teachers as possible in reading instruction. And either program was compatible with parent involvement, a goal which the DMG still hoped to achieve.

The group turned to a detailed examination of the two products. As part of this effort, Wynn arranged conference calls with the product developers in Chicago and San Diego. After the conference calls and further review of the written materials, the DMG decided against IRIP, deeming it too difficult to adapt to the Ogden context. IRIP also seemed to lack an adequate training program. The DMG submitted its choice of San Diego Right to Read to the faculty, which approved the group's decision.

IMPLEMENTATION DELAYED

To implement the San Diego product, the Ogden school would need a full-time reading coordinator. Thus Napier and Wynn scheduled a meeting in late May to present their case to the district's administrators. Their preparations were in vain, however, since the superintendent did not attend, even though he had been invited. Since only he had the power to authorize the hiring of an additional staff member, Jean Napier concluded that the district had no intention of supporting the program at Ogden Junior High School. Napier had found the district administration difficult to deal with during the last few years, and for her this meeting was the last straw. She submitted her resignation from the post of district reading consultant.

At this point the prospects for implementation of San Diego Right to Read seemed bleak, but Bernadette Wynn was unwilling to give up. Later in the summer she wrote a strongly worded letter to the superintendent. She stressed that in order for the San Diego Right to Read program to be successful at Ogden a full-time staff member must be hired to implement it. She also reminded the superintendent of his earlier agreement to cooperate with the project's efforts in Midland. The superintendent promised to look closely into the matter in the fall, when the district would have a new reading consultant and Ogden Junior High a new principal. Soon Valerie Sullivan, a program development specialist with the district, was appointed as the district's reading consultant. After the problem at Ogden was brought to her attention by Bernadette Wynn, she managed to convince the administration to approve the new position. By that time, however, the various district teachers with reading backgrounds were already placed in other schools. As a consequence, it was late in October before the post of reading coordinator at Ogden was filled. The new coordinator was Deborah Olan, a reading specialist who had moved to Midland during the summer.

The Ogden teachers were quite surprised when they learned that the post had been approved by the district administration. While the search for a reading coordinator was being conducted, Bernadette Wynn met with the new principal, talked with Ogden teachers, and generally tried to maintain the project's momentum despite the delay. When Olan finally assumed her position, she spent her first few weeks on the job reading about San Diego Right to Read, planning with Bernadette Wynn and Valerie Sullivan, and meeting district and school administrators. She also conducted a round of interviews with Ogden teachers. In November she flew to San Diego to see the product in action but came back disappointed. The developer of San Diego Right to Read was no longer with the district, and the teacher who was now in charge of the program gave her a tour of classrooms but did not train her in Right to Read techniques.

When she got back, Olan began to put together a reading program for the Ogden school. She received little help from the district administration. In her words, all they gave her were "nods of approval." The principal, who was also new to the school, knew less than she about how to organize the reading program. However, he was supportive of the idea and met regularly with Olan and with one teacher. This so-called "advisory group" of three soon supplanted the larger DMG. Some of the teaching staff, who felt they had lost ownership of the project, reacted with resentment.

With so little support from within the district, Olan was especially grateful for the help she received from Bernadette Wynn. The field agent helped her to develop an implementation plan for Ogden, which she presented to the full faculty and to the district administration in December. Since no one objected to the plan, she felt it had met with general approval. However, when she started approaching individual teachers and asking them to get involved in implementation, they began citing reasons why they personally could not participate in the project.

CHANGES BEGIN ALTHOUGH RESISTANCE GROWS

Despite the teachers' puzzling reaction, implementation began in January 1978 with a "positive image workshop" for the faculty and the students. In February a "Read-In" program began in the school. For a half hour each Friday, everyone in the Ogden school building--teachers, students, administrators, and custodial help--spent a half hour reading silently. This component of Ogden's project received a lot of publicity, thanks largely to the efforts of Valerie Sullivan, and did much to improve the image of the Ogden school in the community. The rest of the project, in contrast, ran into serious problems.

When Olan drew up her implementation plan in December 1977, she had hoped to begin with the language arts and social studies departments and to expand the program to one or two other departments by March 1978. The planned approach had to be abandoned when few teachers in the language arts and social studies departments agreed to use Right to Read in their classrooms. The language arts department, in particular, was a center of opposition to Right to Read, since it was being stripped of the responsibility for teaching reading in the school. The favorable publicity surrounding the Read-In made Betsy Hubbard, the department head, jealous; and Olan was unsuccessful in getting her to cooperate.

Professional jealousy was not the only cause of resistance. Contract negotiations with the district were stalled, creating tension between teachers and administrators. Although Olan was on a teacher's contract, she found teachers lumping her with the administration; nevertheless, she refused to join the teachers' union, saying that she did not believe in strikes. It did not help that her office was located in the administrative area of the school building, or that she was regularly introduced along with the administrators at parent/teacher meetings.

District funding for the Right to Read project was also becoming a problem. When Midland school district signed the contract to join the project, in 1976, the district administration had agreed to spend a certain amount on materials and on training. The district administration complied with the contract to a point, paying for film strips and low-vocabulary written materials for the various classrooms. The district also paid for a second visit to San Diego; this visit was made in May 1978 by the principal and two teachers. However, the administration was not eager to fund a major training event for all Ogden teachers, and finally offered the teachers only five dollars a day to attend a two-day workshop in August. The school's teachers considered this offer an "insult." Only 12 attended the workshop.

The bulk of the training that occurred during 1977-78 took place in private sessions between the reading coordinator and individual teachers who expressed an interest in the program. Since the San Diego Right to Read program was, in the developer's words, "not a product but a process," training was necessary for its implementation. Indeed, since the numerous brochures prepared in San Diego tended to be up-tempo and inspirational rather than detailed and descriptive of the program, training was all the more essential. Deborah Olan sometimes visited classrooms to deal with the students directly;

for instance, she trained students in note-taking techniques. More often, she would confer with a teacher, make suggestions as to techniques (for instance, directed reading assignments), or present recently arrived materials. On the whole, teachers were critical of her training efforts, which they did not find helpful, and of her lack of follow-up.

Those teachers who cooperated with Olan did so to varying degrees. Nathan Glover, a social studies teacher, participated enthusiastically. He initiated his own Read-In, and for a half hour a week the students in his classes could read anything at all. He also set up a paperback library in his classroom (eventually most teachers did this). Some of the materials, obtained with Right to Read funds, were virtually comic books. Glover began the semester by introducing the course textbook and showing the students how to use the table of contents and index; he also gave them an outline on how to skim-read. As a further result of his Right to Read training, he began to write more vocabulary words on the blackboard.

Though Glover found his entire teaching style affected by the Right to Read program, his case was exceptional. Other teachers chose only a few items from the smorgasbord of possible activities offered by Right to Read, and they did not always persist in their efforts. By November 1978 a gloomy Deborah Olan estimated that just 3 or 4 of the 35 teachers were participating with any enthusiasm.

In other respects, the project seemed to be growing: a positive-image course for eighth graders was introduced, the student advisory committee continued to meet once a month, a parent advisory committee was organized, a math lab was instituted in the fall of 1978, and plans were drawn up to introduce the Right to Read program to other junior highs in Midland. But at least some of this progress was illusory. In imitation of the math lab in San Diego, the math lab at Ogden had been intended as a resource center to which students from regular classrooms would come for short periods of individualized instruction. In fact, the lab was being taught as a class for low achievers, using whole-group instructional techniques, and many of the materials used were not those developed in San Diego.

The continuing resentment of Betsy Hubbard, head of the language arts department, effectively sabotaged plans to open a reading lab in the fall of 1978. Instead, the reading coordinator set up reading classes with a series of materials called "Be a Better Reader." (Ogden teachers expressed a low opinion of the quality of this series.) Another of Olan's ideas was to transform study hall periods into study skills groups. This plan was opposed by most of the teachers assigned to monitor study halls as well as by the students who had chosen study hall instead of an elective.

Although student attitudes and behavior seemed better, especially after Read-Ins, at least some improvement was attributed to the continuing drop in enrollment at Ogden. There were now 650 students, a 40 percent drop from the hectic opening year of 1973. Certainly the teachers' attitudes had not mellowed; as of the winter of 1979 they were working without a contract, pending the conclusion of the negotiations. The project seemed adrift, and teacher gossip had it that Olan might resign or be transferred to a district-level position.

THE PROJECT TRANSFORMED

Several dramatic events turned the project around and made it a success. As the 1978-79 school year ended, both the principal and the reading coordinator left Ogden. Olan joined the staff of a local college. Betsy Hubbard, head of the language arts department, was appointed to Olan's post. Hubbard was respected by many of the teaching staff, who had sympathized with her during her feud with Olan. Although the position of reading coordinator would be half-time for 1979-80, few mourned the change in personnel.

Even more momentous was the 27-day teacher strike that rocked the district in September 1979. The strike had been long awaited and proved quite acrimonious, leading to the resignation of the superintendent. Although teachers won pay raises, the meager provisions for inservice time (16 hours a year) remained unchanged. Even so, the psychological effect on the teachers at Ogden was significant. The teachers emerged from the strike as a cohesive unit (all but two had struck) with high morale. Among the results were monthly teacher socials and increased communication among teachers and between departments. Now that Olan was gone, more teachers were favorably disposed to the Right to Read program, and they devoted their renewed energies to making it work.

The math lab joined the Read-In program in the front rank of project success stories. The two teachers running it essentially developed the lab on their own, though the district did subsidize two field visits they made to other sites. The teachers began to individualize the instruction offered in the lab, with very favorable results: up to one-half of the previously low-achieving students were brought nearly up to grade level. The success of the math lab created a good deal of interest in starting a reading lab, although Betsy Hubbard, the new reading coordinator, did not move to do this. She believed that only a full-time reading teacher could take on so demanding a task. In the meantime, the unpopular reading course "Be a Better Reader" filled at least part of the need.

The school's librarian added her support to the Right to Read project. Overlooked in the previous year by Deborah Olan, she became active in 1979-80 and with Hubbard's help initiated several programs: a book fair that sold $700 worth of books, mainly to Ogden students, and a two-month program called "Calendar Clue." The latter program called for students to answer a question by using reference materials in the library. A clue was posted each day until a student found the answer; the prize was a book certificate. The librarian estimated that students were checking out 10 percent more books than in the previous year, probably as a result of Right to Read.

Most teachers remembered Olan's training efforts as fairly useless. In an attempt to avoid Olan's mistakes, Betsy Hubbard conducted training only when requested. Since the district continued its tight-budget policy and refused to pay for inservice training, the staff development aspects of Right to Read were almost completely abandoned. Nevertheless, up to 40 percent of the faculty now claimed to be using Right to Read techniques in their classrooms. Some simply paid more attention to vocabulary and provided a better overview of the class reading assignments. Others did much more. One science teacher completely restructured his curriculum into four levels of reading competency and individualized all his testing, at an enormous cost in time. A few teachers planned to wait until a reading lab was set up before they would make any great effort to teach reading in their own courses.

Other components of the Right to Read program at Ogden were retained from the previous year. These included the positive-image workshops for teachers and students and the positive-image course for eighth graders. New in 1979 was a tutoring program that sent ninth graders to elementary schools to tutor younger students.

An outcome not entirely foreseen when the project began was that the effort at Ogden would spread to other schools. This is exactly what happened in 1979-80; three other junior high schools adopted parts of the San Diego Right to Read program, including the Read-In, the math lab, and positive-image workshops for students and staff. Half-time reading coordinators in each of these schools organized the activities and did some inservice training of content area teachers. These positions were urged on the district by Valerie Sullivan, the district reading consultant, and represented a substantial increase in district level commitment to reading programs. However, the Ogden staff continued to want a full-time staff member to organize a reading lab, and all of them signed a letter to the superintendent asking him to create such a position.

One thing that was lost during the troubled history of the project at Ogden was the initial interest in the problem-solving process itself. Changes initiated from the bottom up were rare in Midland, and the successful efforts of the Ogden DMG did not go unnoticed elsewhere in the district. However, the DMG was effectively dismantled by the end of 1977, and in a few years there were no administrators left in the district who had worked on the problem-solving effort. Nevertheless, though the process might not be repeated, the San Diego Right to Read program appeared to be a permanent addition to the school and the district.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) A major concern of the social systems perspective is the school's readiness for change. Not all resistance can be dismissed as irrational or reactionary. Thus, the Odgen faculty's feeling of powerlessness to improve the reading program, discouragement over the persistence of poor teaching conditions, and resentment at the district's indifference to their problems seemed to indicate a legitimate lack of readiness to undertake a change effort. Yet this faculty achieved success. Why?

(2) The lack of active support at the district level for the Ogden project was a major problem. The superintendent resisted hiring a full-time reading coordinator, offered inadequate funding for materials and training, and generally failed to get behind the school's efforts. All the district gave were "nods of approval." What, if anything, could have been done to obtain more active district support?

(3) Suppose that Jean Napier had not resigned her post and had been an active participant for the duration of the project. What impacts might this alternative scenario have had on the decision-making process or implementation of San Diego Right to Read?

(4) "It is marvelous to talk about a rational process of decision-making, where you identify a problem and select the most appropriate solution after getting all the facts, but how often does a principal or teacher have the time for such luxuries? Something always happens--teachers go out on strike, the school board wants better discipline, or you get distracted by the normal demands of running the schools--and you have to act fast. Educators have to make fast, intuitive decisions under pressure." Based on your reading of the cases to this point, how would you respond to this statement?

(5) Identify what you consider to be the major "turning point" in this case, i.e., the event or circumstance that made the difference between success and failure.

CHAPTER 13

GALAXY HIGH SCHOOL

Richard I. Arends

In the latter half of the 1970s, Galaxy High School initiated a change program which would affect teaching methods in several of its departments, including English, social studies, math, and science. The change program persisted despite a series of disturbing, though unrelated, events: a parents' revolt against the principal and the superintendent, teacher dismissals due to declining enrollments, a three-week teachers' strike, and the resignation of a key staff member. The site's experience illustrates the importance of strong internal and external leaders and of a widely shared belief in the need for change.

Galaxy High School was in Summit City, a city of 80,000 located in a western state. Summit City had received numerous awards for quality of living, and its citizens, interested in preserving that quality, were aware of environmental issues. The local economy was healthy. A wood products industry, supplemented by tourism and various small, clean industries, kept unemployment low. The city's population, which grew moderately during the 1960s, stabilized in the following decade, and school enrollment began to decline year by year.

Many teachers in the district received their degrees from a prestigious university located in the city; many also continued to attend night and summer classes. District staff prided themselves on being innovative; educators from other parts of the state regarded Summit City as a pace setter. The district's young superintendent, who came to Summit City in 1973, increased the rate of change in the schools. He reorganized the central office, instituted new procedures for rotating and transferring principals, set up alternative schools and community schools, and introduced open attendance policies.

In a time of falling enrollments and rising costs, the increased pace of change in the district could be expected to meet resistance from some people. Nowhere was this more likely to happen than in North Summit, the part of town in which Galaxy High School was located. North Summit was once a rural area, but had since been absorbed into Summit City. Many of its residents still looked to the lumber industry outside the city for their livelihood, though an equal number worked downtown. The area tended to be more suspicious of social programs and government spending than the rest of Summit City. Over the years, North Summit voters had supported conservative school board members and rejected levies and bond issues with some regularity.

Galaxy's 1200 students reflected the socioeconomic mix of the North Summit area. Eighteen percent were from poor families, judging by free-lunch figures, a slightly higher percentage than the city-wide average. Although absenteeism was higher at Galaxy, the school was less troubled by vandalism than were the other schools in Summit City. Reading scores for Galaxy students placed the school in the 64th percentile nationally; the district-wide percentile ranking was six points higher.

If the school's reading program left something to be desired, the same could not be said of its athletic program. Galaxy's teams had won numerous state championships during the 1970s. Galaxy had a reputation in Summit City as a "jock" school, and there were rumors of an "academic vs. athletics" split among its 78 certified staff.

COMPATIBLE AND CONVENIENTLY LOCATED

The Summit City school district was divided into four administrative regions. It was the curriculum specialist for the North Summit region, Frank Wyatt, who first learned of a new federally funded project to help schools improve their reading programs. He had attended a talk given by Sarah Volpe, the project's field agent, who was employed by the regional educational service district. Volpe was conducting meetings across the state to inform educators of the existence of the federal project. Wyatt alerted his superintendent and kept in touch with Volpe, who wanted to choose a district in the Summit City area to participate in the project.

Two other districts were in the running, but they were both in isolated rural areas. As the deadline for selecting a site neared, Volpe inclined more and more toward the Summit City district, which was located much nearer to her headquarters. Frank Wyatt continued to express enthusiasm. In late April 1977 Volpe extended a formal invitation to the superintendent, asking for the district's participation in the project, with Galaxy to serve as the site school. She cited "the interest and commitment the site school has expressed in the area of reading" as the reason for selecting the school.

Wyatt backed up her invitation with a memo on May 5. In it, he encouraged the superintendent to approve the project, saying he was "excited about the opportunity because it provides resources for a project that is in the planning stages at Galaxy High--a concerted effort to improve reading in the content areas." The next day the superintendent sent a letter to the field agent stating the district's interest and willingness to fulfill all project commitments. He requested a meeting with the field agent and the project director, to be attended by relevant Galaxy staff.

The meeting was held in late May 1977. The superintendent, the field agent, and the project director were all present, along with the regional curriculum specialist. Representing Galaxy High School were Eugene Booth, the principal, and Louis Forberg, head of the school's language arts department. These six persons reviewed the purposes of the project and the obligations of site schools. Then the superintendent and the director of the project signed a written agreement, making Galaxy a project site.

QUICK AND DIRTY PLANNING

Volpe visited Galaxy twice between May and September of 1977. The major purpose of these visits was to meet with Wyatt and Forberg to discuss the formation of a local task force. Forberg, as head of the language arts department, would serve as task force chairman. Volpe, who considered the formation of the task force to be quite important, was pleased with the meetings. She wrote in her notes that she had "no difficulties," and that the meetings "progressed extremely smoothly."

However, when the task force met for the first time in October, only five persons were present: Volpe, Forberg, Wyatt, an elementary reading specialist who would serve as a special consultant, and Susan Lee, the reading teacher at Galaxy High School. According to criteria established by the project, the group was imporperly comprised. Noticeably absent were the principal, teachers from various departments in the school, and parents or community representatives. Volpe would continue to feel concern that teachers were underrepresented and that the community was not represented at all. Nevertheless, this group of people was thereafter called the task force and little, if any, effort was made to expand or change the composition of the group to more closely fit the guidelines.

At its October meeting, the task force made plans to conduct the needs assessment required by the project. They prepared the questionnaires and decided on a procedure for asking teachers about their current reading programs and instructional activities. Forberg and Wyatt agreed to summarize the data from the district's testing program for use at the next meeting.

When the task force met again in November, Forberg and Wyatt had collected some survey information from teachers and had summarized student test scores for the past several years. The information from teachers confirmed that little was being done at Galaxy to promote reading. The school had a reading laboratory that served as an elective for poor readers, but few teachers reported helping students with vocabulary and reading skills in other classes. A seven-year profile of test scores showed that average reading scores for students in the 11th grade at Galaxy had fluctuated from the 51st percentile in 1973 to a high of 70 in 1976. Scores for 1977 had been in the 64th percentile. After discussing this information the group identified the problems and priorities they wanted the project to address. According to Volpe's notes of this meeting, the top priority was to "increase teachers' skills so that they could teach kids to read present materials in science, social studies, mathematics, and language arts."

Even though Volpe did not say so to the group, she was a bit disturbed about how quickly the problem identification work was done. Her concern was that the task force was using data to support preexisting goals for project involvement. She noted privately that "the problem statement may be valid, but the assessment/decision-making process will not be 'pure.'" Louis Forberg, the head of the language arts department, did not share the field agent's concern. In his mind, the problem was obvious from the beginning--the need to improve reading in the content areas--and the process of establishing criteria for solution selection was just "wheel spinning."

SQUARE PEG, ROUND HOLE

Although a problem statement was never really formalized, activities to select a solution began after the November meeting. Early in December, Sarah Volpe went through the project's knowledge base and identified some programs she thought would fit the school's needs. A good number were elementary programs that she thought might be useful. She sent a list of possible programs to the head of the language arts department and to the regional curriculum specialist, and then talked to each of them by phone. She soon learned that Forberg and Wyatt were discussing the problems with members of the faculty. In the middle of January, however, she received a memo from Forberg saying that there was nothing in the knowledge base they could use.

Volpe was of course disappointed, but there was much truth to Forberg and Wyatt's contention. To begin with, only 13 of 60 reading programs in the project's knowledge base were developed for use with junior or senior high school students. Furthermore, most of these programs were designed for students with severe reading problems. Few emphasized reading in the content areas, the problem identified by Galaxy High School.

Volpe had attempted to compensate for this lack by encouraging the school and the task force, particularly Chairman Forberg, not to "overlook" the elementary programs in the knowledge base. She believed from her own training in elementary reading that some of the elementary programs could be helpful. It must be conceded, however, that she badly wanted a "match" between the school and an R&D outcome. She regretfully communicated the task force's decision to the project staff, with a request that they conduct a special search for Galaxy.

At this point the field agent decided to meet with Galaxy's principal, Eugene Booth. Although Principal Booth had been supportive and active in seeking the project for his school, he had not attended either the October or the November task force meetings. Volpe was worried that he was not being kept informed of developments. Their meeting confirmed this suspicion. Principal Booth was not aware of Forberg and Wyatt's decisions, except in a very general way. In fact, he had been doing some planning on his own. He had secured a consultant from a neighboring district who was experienced in setting up inservice programs that emphasized reading in the content areas. A bit dismayed at the principal's independent action, Volpe nonetheless agreed to pay the consultant's fee and travel expenses out of project funds.

The consultant, Laszlo Panofsky, came to Galaxy in February and spoke to members of the faculty after school. Twenty-eight teachers, six department heads and the principal attended the talk, which was well received. Also in February, Volpe arranged for Susan Lee, the reading teacher at Galaxy, to attend a workshop on the San Jose Project (one of the programs that had been rejected earlier). The field agent hoped that the study and vocabulary guides and the parent-student materials in this project might interest the Galaxy staff.

Volpe was getting more and more worried about the site during this period of time. Their rejection of all the programs in the knowledge bank, the principal's independent action in securing a consultant, the lack of community and broad faculty involvement, and the fact that the task force had not met formally since November were signs that "not much was happening." She believed that the site had identified "rather global priorities" and that "a solution was governing the problem definition." She also noted that Chairman Forberg was very much involved in other school activities.

Volpe decided that she needed to take a more active stance, so she set up a meeting of the task force for March 3, 1978. She invited a program selection specialist from the project staff to discuss the project's knowledge base and to report the results of the special search that had been conducted for Galaxy. On the agenda was development of selection criteria, something she had been "pestering" Forberg to do, without success. At the DMG meeting were Forberg, Wyatt, and Lee. The visiting specialist acknowledged that not many programs existed at the secondary level. In his words, "There are individual experts, but few functioning programs." He suggested that the San Jose Project was still a possibility and also recommended that they look into a program developed by Harold Herber of Syracuse, New York.

Both the program selection specialist and the field agent encouraged the task force to identify their problems more precisely and to develop some criteria to guide their selection efforts. These suggestions were resisted; in fact, as the field agent subsequently reported, "The criteria were never developed except in a very hasty fashion by Chairman Forberg several months later to comply with my need to document that part of the process." However, two agreements came out of this meeting: the program selection specialist would continue to search for programs that would be suitable for use at Galaxy, and someone from the school would visit the San Jose Project in April.

A SERIES OF DELAYS

When the field agent and members of the task force got home that evening, they were surprised by the headlines in the local paper: "Parents Seeking Principal's Removal; Petitioners Claim Galaxy's Leader Too Liberal." Principal Booth, who was in his third year in the district, was being considered by the school board for tenure, and a group representing about 50 families, including officers of the Galaxy School Advisory Council, was petitioning that tenure be denied.

The parents were dissatisfied with the principal's rather liberal attendance policies, his student-centered rather than academic-centered views, and his ways of dealing with discipline (some parents and faculty thought he was too soft). Parents were influenced by a charge that he was "anti-athletics," made by several popular coaches on the faculty, and by his image as a liberal educator chosen by the young superintendent. Many parents viewed the superintendent as someone who was mainly concerned with making kids feel good rather than making them achieve up to their abilities. All this occurred at a time when the superintendent was also being attacked for transferrng several high school principals in the district to junior highs the previous year.

During the spring of 1978, task force members and the Galaxy faculty spent more energy dealing with the controversy than investigating the school's reading program. As Volpe reported in her notes,

> Obviously Principal Booth's energies were diverted to dealing with this, and so were Chairman Forberg's. The chairman was present at every meeting related to this issue. He was very much a defender of the principal's work at Galaxy and was a supporter of the principal professionally and personally.

The head of the language arts department was not the only task force member to speak out for the principal in public meetings. Susan Lee, the reading teacher, was another of his defenders. She once mentioned the principal's leadership in getting the reading project for the school. Aside from this, the project had no part in the controversy.

In April, Volpe's father died. Her temporary absence, coupled with the extended controversy around the principal, ensured that the task force would not meet. Wyatt did visit the San Jose Project when he was in the area on other business. Upon his return he reported that he was "unimpressed and could not really see anything going on." The teachers in San Jose who he thought had developed the program were gone, and he found little to observe and few people with whom to talk.

In May, Forberg gave a report about the project to other department heads at Galaxy. He got them to agree to ask each teacher to include a vocabulary list with their course goals for the following year. Forberg intended this as an effort to begin building faculty-wide commitment to the project. However, no further project activities occurred until midsummer. The task force had not met in months, a clear problem statement still did not exist, and no progress had been made toward formally selecting a solution.

Instead, political issues and personnel problems claimed attention. Although the school board did grant Principal Booth tenure, he was transferred to another school and resigned soon after to take another job. Meanwhile, the insurgent parents elected several anti-superintendent candidates to the board. Anticipating a confrontation with the new board members, the superintendent resigned in the fall to accept a superintendency in another state. By then, a third shock had hit the district. Because of declining enrollments, layoff notices were sent to some 50 teachers, 6 of them at Galaxy High School.

During the summer of 1978 Volpe and Wyatt discussed the project several times over the telephone. Both were dismayed by the lack of progress and agreed that, although the controversy surrounding the principal's tenure and subsequent resignation could not have been avoided, the fact that Chairman Forberg was spread so thin was a problem. They decided to meet with the new principal and Chairman Forberg in late August.

REGAINING LOST MOMENTUM

Albert North, the new principal, had been transferred to Galaxy from an elementary school in the North Summit region. His training, past experience, and motivation caused project members to view him as a person who would be supportive of reading programs. Volpe and Wyatt used the meeting in August to discuss plans for the 1978-79 school year and to brief Principal North about the project's goals and prior activities. This meeting produced a commitment from the new principal that he would be supportive, although other issues would prevent his active involvement with the project.

The meeting also set off a series of telephone conversations between the field agent, the regional curriculum specialist, and the head of the language arts department about selecting and implementing a program. Wyatt and Forberg felt that the best approach would be to provide inservice training for a core group of faculty on reading in the content areas. They convinced Volpe to give up her desires to establish selection criteria and find a suitable program in the knowledge base. When the task force next met in mid-September 1978, it drafted an implementation plan calling for a series of consultants to visit the school. Laszlo Panofsky, who had spoken to the staff the previous year, would make a return visit. A consultant from the state department of education would give an overview of reading in the content areas. A consultant from Junior Great Books would be hired to work with selected teachers. Finally, the field agent for another project site that had developed its own program on reading in the content areas would come to speak to the teachers at Galaxy. With the help of these consultants the group would develop their own program and pilot test it with a core group of teachers, starting in January 1979.

TRAINING GETS UNDER WAY

The first two meetings took place in October. Laszlo Panofsky met with the task force and a teacher recruited from the science department on October 17, 1978. He advised the group on inservice training, recommending that they first use workshop sessions to increase teachers' knowledge and then provide follow-up for skill development. He suggested the best place to start would be to get teachers to work on vocabulary development with their students. Panofsky also stressed the need for a good evaluation system so that teachers could see progress as reading skills started to improve.

On the next day, the same group met for two hours with a consultant from the state department of education. The consultant distributed a document describing what teachers in all 50 states had rated as the most and least important topics in an inservice on reading in the content areas. He also gave them a bibliography of relevant professional books. Discussion then turned to readability formulas and to the work of Harold Herber (who had been mentioned once before by the project's program selection specialist). Several members of the group expressed an interest in retaining Herber or one of his associates as a consultant.

The field agent for the site that had developed its own program could not visit Galaxy because of other commitments in his district. However, it turned out that the program he had helped develop was based on the work of Harold Herber. The program was called the Content Reading In-Service Package (CRISP). Its purpose was to train teachers to teach reading comprehension in content area courses without special materials.

Since the field agent from this site could not visit Galaxy, Volpe arranged for Forberg and Wyatt to visit him. As they inspected the CRISP materials he sent prior to their visit, they began to think they had found a program very close to what they wanted. By this time they had chosen the core group of teachers for whom inservice was to be provided. Confident that CRISP was the program they were looking for, Forberg and Wyatt told the core group to prepare for a full-day training session on November 17, 1978. On November 9 the two flew to the other project site to observe CRISP in action. Their two-day visit went well. Very much impressed with the program, Forberg and Wyatt came back eager to teach what they had learned to the teachers in the core group.

On November 17, the 10 teachers in the core group--representing the social studies, English, math, and science departments--met to be trained by Forberg. A second and essentially similar session was held on December 8. Both sessions were well received. During the morning of each session, Forberg lectured on topics such as readability, assessing student needs, teaching vocabulary, and teaching for comprehension. The teachers then spent the afternoons planning to apply CRISP techniques in their own subject areas and classrooms.

In particular, the inservice was designed to assist teachers in developing the following materials for use with each reading assignment:

1. A *vocabulary overview* that identified new words or word meanings and diagrammed the relationships among them;

2. A *systematic study guide* consisting of a task for the students that would demonstrate their understanding of the main concepts in the reading assignment;

3. A *three-level reading guide* consisting of important details in the reading assignment, the teacher's own interpretations or generalizations, and statements which applied these interpretations or generalizations to other situations; and
4. A *pattern of organization guide* that identified the underlying organization of a reading assignment and helped students to understand the main concepts while recognizing and working within the organizational pattern.

One other training session was held in November. Six teachers from the core group, along with staff from other schools in the district, attended a full day of training on the topic of "Teaching Junior Great Books." The intent of this training was to increase the teachers' skills in meeting the developmental reading needs of able and gifted students. The head of the language arts department and the regional curriculum specialist believed the Junior Great Books approach was needed to round out the model for teaching reading in the content areas. This training also pleased the participants.

In early January 1979 the core group and members of the task force met for a day to review what they had learned and to perfect the vocabulary lists, study guides, and reading guides they would use in their classes. Plans were made to invite Judith Thelan, a nationally-known consultant from Syracuse University, to work with them in May. Finally, Frank Wyatt reported on the evaluation plan he and Sarah Volpe had devised to assess the program. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills would be administered later in January and again in June. Wyatt would supplement this procedure by making classroom observations and holding interviews with teachers and students.

THE PILOT TEST BEGINS

Students who had one of the 10 teachers trained in the CRISP methods found that their classes were now different. Along with their chapter assignments, the students got lists of key words used in that chapter, with instructions to place the words into given categories. The students were also asked to agree or disagree with factual statements about what they had read. When the wording of these statements differed from the text of the chapter, the pupils were forced to deal with the meaning of particular words.

More challenging were the interpretive statements, which correctly or incorrectly expressed the author's ideas, and the applied statements, which used the author's ideas in new contexts.

Use of the CRISP techniques varied from department to department. The math and science teachers spent around 10 percent of their class time using CRISP. For social studies and English, the figure was more like 50 percent. The pupils generally liked CRISP, as did their parents. Teachers felt they were getting good results, which made up for the extra work involved in drawing up the vocabulary overviews and guides. The teachers also enjoyed the increased communication between the different departments at the school that had resulted from periodic core group meetings.

Once implementation was under way, the task force lost its chairman. The head of the language arts department, Louis Forberg, resigned suddenly in March to take a position in his family's business. However, the task force had already lost its importance when CRISP was installed. Frank Wyatt continued to monitor classes while Volpe made final arrangements for the May training session with Judith Thelan.

The three-day training workshop early in May was the most successful yet. Judith Thelan was a nationally recognized expert in reading in the content areas and was very familiar with the work of Harold Herber. Attending were the core group, an additional 12 Galaxy teachers who had expressed interest in implementing CRISP and a number of teachers from junior high schools that provided students to Galaxy.

The training was concrete and very classroom-specific. Thelan presented her material clearly and was well organized. She did more than help teachers understand reading in the content areas--she got them excited about it. The workshop format permitted a good deal of interchange between the teachers and the consultant, and teachers left the workshop in high spirits.

Their elation was temporary. In March the Summit City teachers' organization had requested a pay increase for the 1979-80 school year. Negotiations went on for two months, but in mid-May the board flatly refused to consider any raise. The result was a three-week strike by the teachers' organization, which failed in achieving their demands. Soon after the strike ended, dismissal notices arrived for 50 more teachers, including 8 at Galaxy. Again the cause was diminishing enrollment.

Morale was low among Galaxy teachers when classes started that September. Despite the quality of their work, the board and the community had opposed them. Moreover, by December it was apparent that another six teachers would be dismissed at the end of the academic year.

Nevertheless, the CRISP program continued. The 22 trained teachers had about 500 students, or half of the school enrollment, in their classes. Plans existed to train another 20 teachers in CRISP techniques at the end of the school year, since the general opinion of the program remained favorable. Indeed, many teachers found that the program helped heal their wounded feelings. Its beneficial impact on pupils helped reassure them that they were indeed effective, despite the lack of recognition from the board and the community. And since CRISP had survived the dissolution of the task force, changes in administrators, and successive waves of layoffs, there seemed little doubt that it would persist at Galaxy High School.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) Problem solving in organizations is an interactive process. Using this case as your frame of reference, describe the major forces in Galaxy High School's external environment with which it had to interact in addressing its reading problem. Compare these forces with the forces confronted by Jefferson Elementary School in an earlier case.

(2) The Galaxy teachers convinced Sarah Volpe, the field agent, to abandon her insistence that the school develop explicit selection criteria before choosing a product from the knowledge base. If you had been the field agent, would you too have acceded to the teachers' demand or would you have continued to press for explicit criteria? Relate what Volpe actually did and what you would have done in her place to one or more of the perspectives on school change.

(3) This case exemplifies a successful change process, even though it had its difficult moments. Describe a successful change process you have observed or in which you participated. Analyze (a) how you defined "success" and (b) the individuals and events that helped to achieve success.

(4) Identify what you consider to be the major "turning point" in this case, i.e., the event or circumstance that made the difference between success and failure.

CHAPTER 14

CRAMER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Ruth Anne Olson

The pressure of external events has thwarted more than one effort at educational change. Cramer Junior High is a case in point. After two years of planning for a new reading improvement project, most of Cramer's students and teachers were moved to another school as part of a city-wide desegregation plan. This effectively put an end to the project at Cramer, but even before this disruption progress was slow. The teachers were skeptical of externally developed products, felt their own programs were better than most, and were preoccupied with discipline problems and with a pending court decision on desegregation. Moreover, the principal did not actively participate in the project. Even had the school maintained its regular junior high program, success of the project was not assured, as the following story will demonstrate.

The Cramer school was located in River City, the hub of a midwestern metropolitan area with a population of nearly two million. As with many urban districts, River City had to deal with budget problems in its educational system. Declining enrollment, inflation, and the increased number of programs mandated by the state and federal governments all made money tight. The schools also faced stiff requirements for desegregation, and since 1972 had been under court order to meet defined percentage goals for both students and staff. Quality of education was, of course, an ever-present issue, especially as people differed on what style of education was best. During the 1970s there were demands both for humane education and for a return to the basics.

The River City school district had faced those demands with considerable creativity and an eye toward innovation. In 1971, for example, the district began implementation of a city-wide plan for alternative education. The basic format of the plan was to provide a choice of programs for every elementary child. By 1977, although the choices were not yet equally available throughout the district, they included as many as five distinct styles of programs, ranging from fundamental schools to free schools.

The magnet school plan enabled parents to choose the kind of education they deemed best for their children, but it was also a major tool in the district's goal of desegregation. By careful planning of where to put particular programs, desegregation in many parts of the city was achieved by peaceful, voluntary means. Even so, by 1975 the federal judge who retained jurisdiction over the district's desegregation plans ruled that voluntary means could not be trusted in one section of the city, and that mandatory boundary lines must be drawn in order to lower the minority percentages in some schools.

Two other components of planning in the city's schools had been aimed at facilitating desegregation. Starting in 1973 the district required human relations training for staff, students, and community in each school; the district also required that some of this training focus on racism and sexism. In 1974 the district implemented a decentralized administrative plan which divided the schools of the district into three geographic areas, each with its own superintendent, resource staff, and decision-making structure. This innovation encouraged community involvement at the area level as well as furthering the desegregation effort.

One of the units of River City's schools was a teacher center, maintained collaboratively with the local university. Among other activities, the teacher center served as an umbrella agency for externally-funded projects. In August 1976 the teacher center became involved in a new federal program to help schools adopt innovative solutions to problems in reading. At least one of the schools would be from one decentralized area of the River City school district.

Ann Burnett, the field agent, was a tenured teacher in the district and very familiar with the inner workings of the school system. This was a great help to her as she began establishing contacts with the area superintendent, the Title I coordinator, and others whose support she would need. However, the selection of a school did not go smoothly. Burnett visited six elementary schools, one after another; despite repeated interviews with principals and staff, all ultimately declined to participate in the project.

Basically, people felt they were already involved in too many things, including environmental education, an intergenerational project with senior citizens, Teacher Corps, a new district-wide adoption of Ginn 720 for elementary reading, and extensive building renovation. Teachers did not perceive the project as an opportunity to solve a pressing problem, but rather as another demand on their time. Because the elementary schools were so wrapped up in the adoption of Ginn 720 and the extensive inservice training it required, several people eventually suggested to Burnett that she turn her attention to the junior high schools. In December, Burnett contacted Frank Hall, the principal of Cramer Junior High; as he recalled later, his response was enthusiastic: "When the reading program was offered to us, I jumped on it."

THE CRAMER SCHOOL

One of five junior high schools in the decentralized area, Cramer was built in 1922. Frank Hall had been its principal for six years, but had been on sabbatical at the teacher center during 1974-75. One of his two assistant principals was a minority group member; however, of the 35 staff members, only four of the professional staff belonged to minorities, and this in a school with 49 percent minority enrollment. Sixty-five percent of the 590 students were eligible for free lunch, compared to a district-wide eligibility of 36 percent.

A concomitant of poverty often is low achievement, and so it was at the Cramer School. According to the Gates-McGinitie reading tests administered in the fall of 1976, 42 percent of the entering seventh graders at Cramer read at the fifth grade level or below. Cramer teachers were aware of these figures, volunteering such statements as, "We're at the bottom of the barrel in reading," and "Cramer is the very lowest in the city, you know."

Reading scores were not the only problem at Cramer; a great deal of attention was devoted to the issue of discipline. The staff initiated several projects such as "Student of the Month" as positive motivations toward work and good conduct, and they generally tightened rules about hall and classroom behavior. Cramer staff saw their school as being a troubled place. They had become aware of increased use and selling of drugs among students. Even more alarming, a number of physical attacks against staff had occurred in the last two years. Teachers were well aware of the intertwining nature of learning, self-concept, and behavior, but the immediacy of behavior problems, in contrast to the less tangible, long-range nature of learning and self-concept, increasingly demanded their attention.

Several special programs in the school were designed to address directly the problems of behavior and school adjustment. One program enrolled approximately 30 students and was designed to reward good behavior and achievement with highly desired after-school and weekend activities. Another program took 25 students out of the mainstream classroom for four hours a day in order to work on academic and adjustment problems; still another program provided 14 students with educational opportunities in a learning center outside the school setting.

THE PROJECT BEGINS

During January 1977 Ann Burnett met with Principal Hall, with Larry McCarthy, the Cramer reading specialist, and with Kitty Nicholson, the English department chairperson. All three expressed interest in the program, and a meeting with the entire English department was scheduled for February 2, 1977. All seven members of the English department were in attendance. Frank Hall, however, was not present because of another commitment.

According to teachers' memories of that meeting, Burnett introduced the project to them and said that Cramer had been selected to participate in it. In retrospect, at least, teachers were confused about just what that meant. They clearly believed that "they had been selected to participate" and not that "they were being invited to participate." Several people assumed that the area superintendent wanted Cramer to be included because of its low reading scores. When asked whether or not they had a choice about being involved, they were not sure. Most hesitantly replied with statements like, "Well, I suppose we did," or "I never really thought about it, but I guess we could have said no if we wanted to."

At the meeting, teachers did express some concern regarding the number of reading programs in which the school was already involved. There were four such programs, serving over 40 percent of the student body: 150 students were enrolled in Basic English classes and attended a reading center for two hours a week; 65 students were enrolled in a program using Basic Skill Center and Dorsett Reading Program materials; 50 students were enrolled in a third program using Ginn materials; and 14 students received Title I tutoring assistance. During the course of the meeting McCarthy announced that he was writing a proposal to extend the Ginn 720 elementary reading program through junior high. This information, of course, heightened the teachers' sense of being involved in too much.

(The field agent explained that there need not be any conflict of interest in regard to this new program, but that she would take this concern to the principal. When she did so, Hall said that he wasn't bothered. "Students need as much help as they can get, and that may mean seven or eight new programs.")

The participants in the meeting took a number of actions. They established themselves as the decision-making group (DMG) responsible for development of the program at Cramer and agreed that they would invite a parent to serve with them. They also made a tentative decision to focus on programs that could be used in regular English classes. Finally, they arranged for Burnett to interview the teachers at Cramer and report back to the DMG on the results.

THE PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS

The next few months saw continued progress. With help from Principal Hall, Burnett arranged for supplementary Title I funding for the project. She also spoke with McCarthy, the reading specialist, to keep informed of the progress of the Ginn 720 proposal. After she held interviews with the Cramer teachers, she used the results as a basis for discussion at the next DMG meeting in mid-March.

At that meeting, teachers pushed to begin looking at the reading programs available through the project's resource pool. At the same time two teachers were very excited about Scott-Foresman materials which they had learned of at a training workshop. They wanted those materials and asked if the Title I money assigned to the project could be used to purchase them. Burnett was concerned about this desire to make product decisions before adequately defining the problem, and she felt the need to slow them down.

Burnett scheduled a half-day meeting for March 29, at which she presented the results of surveys she had given to the teachers to complete. The teachers, it seemed, were most concerned about the students' poor motivation to learn, though they also had concerns about teacher motivation to motivate students, teacher attitudes and expectations, and students' language skills.

Much of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of behavior problems, although the group also discussed the need for appropriate reading materials as tools for motivation. Once more, the issue of Scott-Foresman materials was raised, to Burnett's discomfiture. She did not want the DMG to feel she wasn't really interested in their problems unless they looked for the answers within her own pool of resources. Thus, she suggested that they might review the Scott-Foresman materials using the selection criteria that they were to develop for the screening of programs from the resource pool.

A major agenda item was to define reading problems. However, the process did not work well as teachers had a hard time putting their problems in writing. Burnett reflected later, "Some people don't do a very good job at that kind of thing. They are able to verbalize problems but are reluctant to focus enough to put them in writing. I didn't put a lot of pressure on them at that point." Even so, the field agent and the teachers recalled that this was a productive meeting, and they left it with a sense of where they wanted to go next. Martha Stark, one of the teachers, would contact the Scott-Foresman salesman for more information. Meanwhile, the field agent would gather resource pool information for the next meeting in April.

During April and May additional meetings of the DMG were held. From the teacher survey and from earlier discussions Burnett culled a list of nine criteria which had emerged as being important to Cramer teachers in the selection of a specific reading program. As before, the teachers wanted a program that they themselves could implement in the classroom. It must be compatible with present reading programs and be appropriate for junior high school students reading two or more years below grade level. High-interest, low-vocabulary material was desirable. The emphasis must be on comprehension and on language skills. Given the teachers' concern with students' motivational problems, the program must develop and strengthen a positive attitude toward learning while providing motivational strategies that teachers could use. Teacher training in the use of the program was also viewed as important.

Using these criteria, Burnett selected 11 programs from the resource pool. The members of the DMG studied the information concerning these programs in relation to the nine criteria, with the intent of finding a program that could be used in their English classes. Two programs, Pegasus-Pace and Vocational Reading Power, aroused some interest. However, the teachers' attention was soon diverted to another program entirely.

In May 1977 the developer of the Exemplary Center for Reading Instruction (ECRI) program came to River City to speak about her program. Three Cramer teachers were released for a portion of the day to hear her presentation. "The program developer," Burnett commented, "is a very impressive salesperson," and the Cramer teachers were sold. Kitty Nicholson, the English department chairperson, recalled, "We thought that here was the answer to our reading problems, not only for our own building, but for the entire school district." They lost all interest in the programs originally suggested by the field agent. ECRI was the answer.

Plans were made to see the program in action. Eventually, Nicholson and a district administrator visited a demonstration site to observe ECRI. They were quite disappointed. Recalling what they saw, Nicholson said, "It was awful. It's a dehumanizing method. The results may be good, but we just knew we couldn't use it here."

THE DECISION-MAKING GROUP

Throughout the problem-solving process, Burnett had to deal with the fact that the DMG was easily distracted. They wanted to spend meeting time discussing behavior problems and school issues generally, rather than sticking to the task at hand. The field agent found them to be "preoccupied with discipline problems. It was always difficult to keep people focused on 'reading' as a particular problem to be considered."

Moreover, attendance at DMG meetings was sometimes spotty. Principal Hall was never present at a meeting, although Burnett kept him informed of when and where the DMG would meet next, and what decisions had been made at the last meeting. Burnett believed that his presence would have been a visible sign of support for the program; however, he felt that the teachers "had to do this thing themselves." As for the parent representative, she had a busy schedule of her own. When she did attend meetings of the group, she found herself primarily in the role of listener because the subject matter was frequently technical. Since there was no parent-teacher organization at the school to whom she might report, it was never clear just whom she was representing.

With the beginning of the 1977-78 school year, scheduling problems became an obstacle to the smooth functioning of the group. The school district issued new schedules for junior high schools which eliminated the time previously available for meetings. After trying with much difficulty to work around the new schedule, Burnett called a meeting of the DMG. Only Nicholson and Stark were able to stay for the whole meeting; a third teacher attended for a short time. The remaining teachers were unable to attend or no longer belonged to the DMG: one had left the staff, and another, soon to retire, had withdrawn from the project. The parent did not know of the meeting until it was too late to rearrange her schedule.

As a result, the DMG's rejection of ECRI was quite informal. Nicholson told Stark some of the details of her trip to the demonstration site. Burnett advised her to talk with the missing members of the DMG, too, and Nicholson assured her that she would do so. The possibility of using the program was not raised again.

By late fall of 1977 the DMG had essentially dwindled to two teachers, Nicholson and Stark. These two eventually made most of the decisions regarding the project. Discouragement at the time they had devoted to the process, problems in scheduling meetings, the absence of programs which excited them, and other major demands on their time all served to draw people away from the project. "Actually," mused Stark, "the more we looked into the programs, the more we realized that we didn't need a new program." Other teachers commented that Cramer should be considered as a model reading program itself, rather than having to choose from the programs in the resource pool.

THE PROCESS CONTINUES

In November 1977 Burnett offered to send two people to Dallas, Texas, to a National Diffusion Network Conference where some of the programs from the resource pool would be presented. They chose not to go. Stark said, "All the disseminators would be there to present their programs, but--frankly--that's so commercial. Everyone selling their own programs." "That's the weakness with the whole process," added Nicholson. "All we had to look at were commercial blurbs on each project. And they really were commercial in the sense that they were each trying to sell us." But the teachers later felt that someone should have gone to Dallas. They think they might have been able to get a better sense of what the projects were about. Burnett regretted their decision; she believed that the sense of being part of a major project would have been an important motivator.

The DMG began to rethink one of its major criteria for program selection. Because they were unable to find any programs which could be used in regular English classes, they began to consider the possibility of adding something to the school's reading center. Students came to the reading center two hours a week as part of their Basic English classes. They were placed in Basic English rather than in regular English as a result of their performance on the city-wide testing program using the Gates-MacGinitie test. The staff firmly believed that such a single-shot written test was not an adequate diagnostic tool; to compensate, they moved students in or out of the center on the basis of more informal observation and assessment.

The reading center was a relatively large room divided into four working areas. Students sat four to a table, with one teacher-aide at each table. On a typical day, students listened to a tape recording of a novel and followed along with the books in front of them. After 15 minutes, the adult at the table asked them questions about what they had heard and read. Students then had a choice of several reading games. They were rewarded for good behavior and for performance.

Though the room was filled with books, these were not an active part of the program in the center. Many of the series, some of which were in excellent condition and appeared to be unused, were from an earlier reading program which had been set up by another teacher. Students sometimes checked out paperbacks displayed on a shelf, but that was incidental to the program of the center itself.

Teachers believed that the diagnostic process and general management of the reading center needed improvement. Of the programs suggested by Ann Burnett, two appeared useful: Improvement of Basic Reading Skills (IBRS) and Project Catchup. Nicholson and Stark examined the information about these programs that Burnett had provided. During November representatives of both programs visited Cramer. The DMG members liked Project Catchup, but some aspects did not seem workable in their junior high setting. "The woman insisted that children come every day to the reading center," remembered Stark. "That just couldn't work with our schedule." IBRS was attractive because of its diagnostic testing component. Said one teacher, "We liked the project because it resembles what we have here very much. Frankly, it *is* this program." The teachers were not impressed with the developer's lack of knowledge about junior high settings, but they felt that parts of the program were adaptable and that adaptation would be acceptable to the developer.

PROGRAM DECISION

By December 1977 teachers were obviously feeling pressure to make a decision. "It's getting to be embarrassing," explained Nicholson. "People are sincere: we're trying, but we just can't find a program that fits." Stark said simply, "It's time we *do* something."

In December Burnett brought materials to Cramer, providing them with more details on IBRS and on Pegasus-Pace, another program with elements that spoke to Cramer's needs. Larry McCarthy stated explicitly that he did not believe Cramer needed a new program--they did fine already. He appeared to be persuaded, however, when Nicholson and Stark stated that the school's testing was in need of improvement. The discussion focused on the diagnostic instruments of IBRS, and the group decided to have a half-day meeting in January, with substitutes to release teachers from their classrooms.

Thanks to the field agent's persistence in arranging for release time, a three-hour meeting of the DMG was held in late January 1978. Burnett was determined to have a decision by the end of this meeting. She was equipped with materials, data, and techniques to facilitate decision making. Present at the meeting were five teachers from the English department; the parent was unable to attend. The group decided to adopt the IBRS management system, including the diagnostic testing and record-keeping components, as well as some of the IBRS materials. It was further decided that teachers should be trained to use the management system and materials on April 4 and 5.

THE FEDERAL COURT ORDER

In less than one week, however, the decisions of the January 24 meeting were thrown into turmoil. As noted, River City school district had been under court order to desegregate its schools. In the long range, it was making progress toward compliance, yet shifting populations and changing demographics often caused short-range setbacks. When choosing Cramer as a location for the project, Burnett had inquired about Cramer's position in relation to the desegregation plan and was assured that it was well within the guidelines and was not likely to be affected by future decisions. On January 30, however, the Cramer staff was informed that their school was included in new plans. The next week the area superintendent presented options for the desegregation of the area schools to the superintendent and to the River City board of education. Each optional plan involved a change for Cramer: to include only eighth graders next year, to be closed for renovation and then reopened as a K-8 fundamental school, or to be closed altogether.

The board voted to return to federal court and seek the easing of the court-ordered percentages. The district made its case in late March and then waited for the decision of the judge before any actions would be taken. Cramer staff and students were thus left for the remainder of the 1977-78 school year in a state of uncertainty regarding their future. In the meantime, Burnett, Nicholson, and Stark completed a needs assessment which had been sent to them by the IBRS disseminator. The assessment identified three areas which they believed to be particularly important components of future training for them: diagnostic testing, the teacher management system, and the parent involvement component.

All concerned agreed that it was not reasonable to follow through with the original plan for holding IBRS training on April 4 and 5. Releasing several teachers at one time was always a problem at Cramer because of the discipline problems of the school and, faced with uncertainty regarding the fate of the school, people were unwilling to go through that process. Also, because the teachers had chosen a reading program involving the reading center, the skills they learned might not be useful in whatever school they transferred to from Cramer.

During the next months Burnett maintained close informal contact with the English department staff and with the Cramer principal, Frank Hall. For a time she tried to keep people thinking of the various options they would, as individuals, choose if Cramer were to close or to change the focus of its program to a K-8 fundamental school. Burnett stayed in close contact with the decisions being made and the directions being considered by the people who would ultimately make the decisions about Cramer. She attended a board of education hearing regarding the desegregation plan, and generally kept up on the news, though much of it was, by necessity, speculation in the absence of a decision by the federal judge. Eventually Burnett decided that it was inappropriate to continue pressing teachers to think about the project and the future of IBRS until the judge made his decision. She then focused on letting the staff know that she was aware of their dilemma and was available to be supportive in any way possible.

In late May 1978, the federal judge announced his decision in regard to the case presented by the school district. Essentially he told the district that he did not agree with their arguments, would not ease the percentage requirements, and that they would no longer be given the luxury of "moving toward" the required desegregation. In fact, they must achieve full desegregation, as defined by the court, in the fall of 1978 and again in the fall of 1979.

Although the board of education subsequently appealed the federal judge's decision and requested a "stay" of the requirement to be in full compliance by the fall of 1978, they ultimately decided to follow the plan that would convert Cramer into a K-8 fundamental school by the fall of 1979. Over a two-year period, a substantial proportion of the Cramer teachers and most of the students would be transferred to Morse Junior High, in the same area of the city. Faced with this decision, Burnett considered two possibilities: to try to maintain the project at Cramer, or to move the program to Morse.

It soon became clear that attempting to maintain the project at Cramer was not a viable alternative. Only one teacher from the DMG was to stay at Cramer, and he was not interested in taking the responsibility for IBRS. Moreover, the Cramer principal, who had been supportive of the project though not actively involved in it, was replaced by an administrator with more seniority. Thus, no one was left at Cramer to nurture the project. Kitty Nicholson, who was to transfer to Morse in September, was still interested in seeing the project through. She and Ann Burnett discussed the idea of moving the project to Morse, and in June 1978 Burnett obtained initial approval for this idea from the area superintendent. He saw the logic of having the program follow the students and also felt the idea had merit because "Morse hadn't anything innovative." Burnett still had a long road ahead of her, however, because now she was essentially starting anew in a different school. Nicholson would not be in a position of authority at Morse; before any program could be implemented, the Morse administration, the Morse reading specialist, and the combined Morse/Cramer teaching staff would need to define the problem in the new context and agree that IBRS, or some other product, was an appropriate solution. That, then, is the story of another school and another problem-solving effort.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(1) A history of innovativeness is widely regarded as a precondition to organizational change. Individuals and schools with a strong "track record" of school improvement constitute more fertile ground for subsequent innovations than those who have been unwilling or unable to make similar efforts in the past. It is curious, then, that the project essentially failed at Cramer despite such a history while it succeeded at Ogden despite a seemingly unimaginative and unenthusiastic staff. Apply the rational, political, and social systems perspectives to the two cases in order to explain the differences in outcomes.

(2) A key step in the problem-solving process described in this case was the formulation of numerous selection criteria to govern the choice of a solution. Comment on this statement by the superintendent of a large urban district: "I envy business managers because they can always weigh the benefits and costs of their alternatives in dollar terms. For most of the toughest problems in education, this is impossible."

(3) The Cramer project might have been terminated at a number of points, e.g., when team members failed to attend meetings, when the team rejected several new programs, etc. A hard decision for any change agent is judging when the effort is hopelessly blocked and should be abandoned. Make a list of the circumstances that would compel you to abort a change effort. Given this list, would the events in this case have prompted you to stick with the process, make some radical changes, or abandon it? When?

(4) Identify what you consider to be the major "turning point" in this case, i.e., the event or circumstance that made the difference between success and failure.

PART 5

SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER 15

ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

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Now that we have had an opportunity to witness the many-splendored reality of planned change in a variety of school settings, it is instructive to synthesize some conclusions in light of those realities. To anticipate ourselves a little, what this analysis will show is that there is no royal road to the understanding or management of planned change. Instead, would-be change managers must weave a course of action among selected aspects of the different perspectives depending upon their past, current, and anticipated situations. As described in Chapter 1, this way of viewing the matter suggests that a set of choice dimensions, or dilemmas, exists consisting of alternative modes of action that are typically faced by managers of change. If one could remain alert to the most common of these dilemmas, one might be capable of retaining flexibility and control over the process by shifting from one tactic to another as warranted by the flow of events. This general approach might be called selective monitoring, since it depends on trying to remain aware of the conditions under which one acts, of the consequences of one's past actions, and of the probable consequences of one's contemplated actions. It is hoped that by reference to a set of clear-cut dilemmas of action, such awareness can be guided by something more than conventional wisdom, theoretical fads, or personal inclinations.

Despite the wide variability of conditions and events seen in the cases, managers of change seem to make decisions according to a limited set of choice dimensions. These practical concerns of change managers can be conveniently grouped into three broad issues--leadership and participation, strategies and tactics, and readiness and contingencies. Table 6-1 lists the dilemmas under the issues to which they pertain.*

At this juncture it is useful to remind the reader of our overall conceptual framework, and how this analysis fits into it. In Chapter 2 we presented a discussion of theoretical perspectives, and briefly foreshadowed the case studies by showing how the perspectives could illuminate the events and outcomes in different schools. The triad of conceptual orders--perspectives, issues, and dilemmas--makes it possible to discern the relationship between the more abstract levels of perspectives, and the more practical level of dilemmas faced by change managers in their daily activities, with the mediating level between these two poles being what we have loosely called the key issues of change management.

Just as the dilemmas facing managers can be grouped into more general issues, so it can be seen that certain dilemmas are more closely tied to a particular perspective. Decisions about strategy and tactics, for example, are prominent concerns of the rational perspective. In particular,

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*For similar efforts to reduce problems of change management to a set of "dilemmas," see Miles (1978, 1980), and Berman and McLaughlin (1979). For a theoretical rationale for this approach, see Sieber (1978).

Table 6-1

MAJOR MANAGERIAL DILEMMAS

Leadership and Participation

High vs. low administrative involvement and control

High vs. low faculty involvement and control

Open vs. closed relationships with the community

Strategies and Tactics

Product vs. process

Reliance on outside expertise vs. self-reliance

Fidelity vs. adaptation of resources

Validated vs. non-validated resources

Integration vs. autonomous implementation

Limited vs. diffuse and comprehensive goals

Formalization vs. naturalism

Readiness and Contingencies

Initial readiness: Go vs. no go

Contingency management: Continue vs. terminate a high degree of formalization of group process (that is, systematic needs assessment, search for a solution, selection of a solution, and evaluative feedback) is characteristic of rational problem solving. The political perspective is reflected in concerns with involvement and control, and environmental relationships. And the social systems perspective can be detected in decisions that favor self-reliance and adaptation of innovations to suit local conditions, low formalization of group process, and diffuse goals. However, this is especially true in a concern with the system's readiness for planned change and whether to terminate in the face of unanticipated events. Thus, our list of dilemmas reflects ways in which the perspectives are pitted against one another as well as including dimensions that tend to be exclusively associated with a single perspective.

There are some logical differences among our choice dimensions that deserve pointing out. Most of the dilemmas comprise scales rather than either/or modes of action, e.g., formalization, locus of control, integration-autonomy of the innovation within the local setting, fidelity-adaptation of the innovation, and openness to the environment. That is, the choices of managers are made more difficult by the fact that it is not a question of determining whether there will be teacher participation versus no teacher participation, but rather a question of *how much* and at *what time*. Further, some of the dilemmas might be resolved by *combining* portions of both poles, e.g., product vs. process. Some *tend* to be mutually exclusive dichotomies, although they are not inherently so, e.g., reliance on external expertise vs. self-reliance, and faculty vs. administrative control. Only two entail actions that are inherently mutually exclusive, i.e., initiating change now vs. rejecting change, and continuing vs. terminating a change effort.

These logical differences are not as important, however, as the fact that all of the dilemmas present alternative actions--and that if the wrong horn of a dilemma is chosen, then the solution may become the problem. A close reading of our case studies shows that action was continually taken with reference to each of the choice dimensions listed. (Note that we say "action taken," rather than "decision made," since the latter phrase denotes greater deliberateness and self-consciousness than was usually the case.) By exploring the effect on project activities and outcomes of these selected courses of action, we might be able to detect those conditions under which a particular resolution of a dilemma was well or ill advised. But our main hope is not so much to formulate propositions about change as to provide a sort of radar grid system that will facilitate selective monitoring on the part of change managers.

Now we turn to an examination of each dilemma in the light of our case study experiences.

LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION

High vs. Low Administrative Involvement and Control

Much study and thought have been given to the appropriate role of administrators in planned educational change, but no clear consensus has yet emerged. The reason is that the effect of administrative involvement depends upon a variety of circumstances, including the administrator's abilities. In some cases involvement is viewed by faculty as an attempt to control them, while in others it is welcomed as a sign of support and readiness to give assistance. The Parker Valley teachers jealously guarded their prerogatives in undergoing the problem-solving process and running their own inservice program independently of administrators. At the other extreme, the Bayfield faculty complied uncomplainingly with their principal's decisions about the project.

In all cases, however, it seems that at least passive support by the administration was *necessary* for change to take place. But passive support was almost never *sufficient*, as we saw in the cases of Cramer Junior High School, Ogden Junior High School, and Sugarville Elementary. In Cramer, the principal enthusiastically endorsed the project but did nothing to help implement it. In Ogden, all the district gave were "nods of approval." And in the case of Sugarville, two successive principals approved of the activities and proposals of the faculty, but did not lift a finger to help overcome problems of lack of training, personnel turnover on the facilitator team, or irregularity of meetings. The lack of *active* administrative support in these schools was one of the main reasons for their projects' difficulties. Only in one case (Greenfield) was the staff able to overcome the passivity of the principal and gain success with classroom implementation, owing mainly to the "leadership, support, and legitimacy" provided by the field agent. But the principal's aloofness made the going very rough, and when the field agent departed, the project lost its momentum.

Often, however, active administrative support is not sufficient either, if it entails little more than dictation to the faculty. Events at Charles Elementary suggest the importance of administrative support *combined* with teacher participation in decision making, i.e., delegation by administrators. There the district director of career education and a high school counselor "felt that the staff at Charles might not be aware of the district's needs as a whole, and thus should not be involved until later in the process." Consequently, they defined the problem, sought information, selected 10 products for faculty review, and then invited four teachers to join them on the site team in order to try out the selected programs. Thereupon the administrators withdrew their involvement and the four teachers eventually either quit using the materials or took jobs elsewhere.

In short, when those who had preempted the project in its early decision-making phases withdrew, those who had been persuaded later on to implement the chosen programs were unable or unwilling to do so. The same strategy was followed by the principal in Penton, but there the principal remained actively involved in the project throughout the period of implementation, taking into account the complaints and recommendations of the implementing teachers. These two cases suggest that the lack of faculty participation together with lack of active administrative support throughout a project will very likely produce failure. Two cases where both teacher participation and active principal support occurred throughout the project are Bell and Jefferson elementary schools. In both of these schools implementation succeeded in spite of very negative factors in the environment.

We therefore arrive at the following tentative conclusions: passive support by the administration might be sufficient if the faculty is involved in non-structural change (e.g., Parker Valley's inservice program), is highly committed and led by a specialist, or has a tradition of self-help and guarding against administrative intrusion in its affairs; otherwise, passive support is not enough. However, not even active support is sufficient without the opportunity for the faculty to participate in decision making, unless the change project is limited to a narrow segment of the school (e.g., Bayfield), in which case an administrator can make all the decisions. Moreover, faculty participation might not have the intended effect unless the local action team has the needed skills for group management and is led by a problem-solving specialist. (This point will be elaborated later when we discuss "strategies and tactics.") In sum, under most circumstances, all of the factors in support of good group process must operate simultaneously.*

High vs. Low Faculty Involvement and Control

There is one further dilemma of group process to be resolved. Should the local team play a strong leadership role, or should it involve as many faculty members as possible in its deliberations? The first alternative promises greater structure and coherence of goals, high consensus on criteria of selection, and speedier deliberations. But the second alternative promises a greater sense of ownership and commitment to the solution among faculty members, and greater relevance of the solution to the felt needs of individual teachers. Here, then, is the classical dilemma between centralized leadership and democratic participation. Let us see how the various schools sought to resolve this familiar dilemma.

There are three possible approaches: great faculty participation, little faculty participation, and a systematic alternation between these two possibilities. The initial year of the project at Parker Valley exemplifies the first approach. The high ratings at the end of the year were attributed by the teachers' association president "to the fact that teachers had selected, designed, and operated the whole show." (In the second year, when the faculty had far less say about the inservice program, the project lost the support that it had enjoyed earlier.) The middle phase of Ogden's project represents the other extreme. The original action team was supplanted by one composed of the principal, the reading coordinator, and a single teacher. "Some of the teaching staff who felt they had lost ownership of the project reacted with resentment," states the case study. And indeed, when teachers were approached individually about implementation, "they began citing reasons why they personally could not participate in the project." In particular, the resentment of the lanquage arts department because decisions were being made independently of them continued to fester. Not until the head of the department replaced the reading coordinator did the project resume, with renewed faculty support and implementation. Galaxy presents a similar case of very limited faculty participation in the local team, but there inservice training was provided for a core group of 10 faculty members who were to implement the new program on a trial basis. The involvement of these teachers in a successful series of workshops apparently overcame their sense of being left out of decision making, for implementation was relatively widespread and effective.

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*It should also be remembered that if the faculty is strongly opposed to a change project, then their participation in decision making might simply give them the opportunity to sabotage the project. This seems to have occurred in Cramer.

Bell Elementary used a combination of both approaches throughout the problem-solving process, the team collecting evidence and defining the problem (with some faculty brainstorming), the faculty helping to establish criteria for a solution, the team screening the options themselves, and the faculty voting on the three options presented to them. Despite the fact that conflict emerged, consensus was finally reached in an amicable manner and the solution broadly implemented.

These experiences suggest that the advantages of both alternatives are maximized when there is movement back and forth between deliberations by a small group and the involvement of all relevant faculty in decision making. This strategy rquires flexibility and a thoroughly professional attitude on the part of the local action team, so that they will not resent a periodic sharing of power. In some cases, the local action team gained more control over time by reducing faculty participation, which suggests a certain tendency to hoard power. The consequence in each case was alienation of the faculty and a decided slowing down of progress.

One way to ensure that a particular clique does not monopolize the team is to include faculty members who are known to be resistant to change, as was done by Greenfield's principal. Also, there it was hoped that "by involving those typically opposed to change, their willingness to support the new reading program would increase." This tactic paid off handsomely when the early resisters later endorsed the program at a ceremony before the entire faculty. However, to reap such benefits in the long run one must be able to tolerate a fair amount of conflict before consensus is finally forged.

Relationships with the Community: Open vs. Closed

The most shadowy participant in our case studies is the parent. Despite program guidelines that called for community involvement in the change project, parents were rarely encountered in any of the projects. Even when they were invited to join the local action team, which occurred in only about half the cases, they tended to withdraw after a few meetings. The case of Charles Elementary is typical: "The parents were more active at first. After a few weeks of product reviews, however, they quickly began to lose interest; within two months both had dropped out."

On the one hand, parents are not qualified technically to assist in many educational decisions. Their involvement might even put a damper on the candid discussion of student problems, political issues, community constraints, and faculty-administration relationships. In addition, a great deal of effort might be needed to overcome a mood of apathy prior to their involvement. As a project leader in the Treeline district said, "To really get parents involved you have to follow up initiatives, telephone, encourage, arrange meeting times to meet their schedules...basically I just had too many other things to do to make an effort here."

On the other hand, parents can play important roles in supplementing the work of classroom teachers, can focus deliberation on home-related problems that might escape the attention of the school staff, and can offer a channel of communication with other parents and the community at large, thereby protecting the project from undeserved criticism or opposition. And yet, it seems that the political vulnerability of schools to their local constituencies causes educators in most cases to resolve this dilemma by closing the door to parental involvement--or by leaving it ajar just enough to make them lose interest or to feel unwanted. It is worthwhile, therefore, to recall the ways in which parents participated in the Jefferson project, the one case where the community became truly involved.

The Jefferson principal had a "policy" of involving parents in school programs; thus, there was no question that they would be invited to join the local action team. One parent who joined was an active member of the Title I Parent Advisory Group. This promised a solid link with an important school-community group. The other parent volunteered after having read about the new project in the newspaper. Both apparently were community leaders with a genuine interest in education. As the case study related:

> The two parents did not have the antipathy toward education which was more typical of Jefferson residents. Both were wealthier than the Jefferson school norm. They were motivated by the desire to improve the quality of education their children were receiving at Jefferson. Although the parents were to miss about half of the team meetings--sometimes because they did not receive adequate notice--they participated actively when they were present. One in particular made her home available for dinners and open-house meetings.

And although the case study is not explicit on the point, it is likely that these parents were influential in the team's decision that "the product allow for effective communication with parents about their children's strengths and weaknesses." This decision meant that all parents were potentially inducted into the project. And indeed, other parents eventually became involved as volunteers in the Jefferson classrooms. In addition, a parent-teacher open house featured videotapes of the program in action, eliciting a number of favorable comments from the audience. The Jefferson community was traditionally not very supportive of its schools. As the case study says with respect to community involvement in the project: "This achievement was notable, given the hostility of the community toward the schools." Very likely, hostility was somewhat alleviated by the practices that we have outlined.

The experience of Jefferson School demonstrates both the educational and political value of parental involvement in local change efforts, providing that those who become centrally involved are not basically hostile or motivated only by political considerations, and that the staff is genuinely interested in their reactions and their support.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

Product vs. Process

The decision to adopt either a product or a process, or some combination of the two, was often made without considering the implications of this choice. In the instance of the RDU program, the problem-solving group process was supposed to be implemented along with new practices in basic skills or career education. In addition, the local staff could opt for an educational product, such as a new curriculum, or an educational process, such as a new instructional method, a restructuring of roles, or even a new role. For the most part, there was a strong tendency to desire products to the exclusion of both the problem-solving process and new educational processes.

The three Treeline administrators responsible for urging the superintendent to accept the RDU project "thought of it mainly as a way of bringing career education products into the district." The Jefferson teachers were impatient with the slow process of defining a problem because "uppermost in their minds was to get on with choosing a product." And the Cramer teachers "pushed to begin looking at the reading programs available through the project's resource pool." This rush to product selection no doubt rests on the assumption that one already has the requisite skills for using a new tool. Thus, it tends to neglect the need for special training and group decision making about implementation. Also, it conveniently neglects the importance of basic role changes in teaching and administration, changes that are probably viewed as threatening and over-demanding.

If a wide range of skills already exists among the staff, if role flexibility is already a norm, or if there is a high level of commitment to using the practice, then the mere adoption of products might well be the most suitable tactic; but these conditions were rarely met in our case study schools. As a result, the participants were sometimes vexed by the amount of training that was required to implement a new product, and in some cases virtually ignored training. In the case of Sugarville Elementary, the brief, one-day training session left the staff "uncertain in their use of the new program." Consequently, "as the year wore on, the teachers tended to ignore the supplemental programs, as they concerned themselves with getting through the regular textbooks." The situation was even worse in Charles Elementary: "the only formal training that occurred was during a September dinner party." And while the ISD's specialist insisted that the materials were self-explanatory and that Charles' teachers were professionals "who knew what they were doing," only very limited, piecemeal implementation occurred. Consequently, the career education program failed to be diffused throughout the district as originally planned.

Two exceptional cases were Galaxy High School and Bell Elementary, both of which achieved a high level of success. In the case of Galaxy a great deal of training was provided in the techniques of a new reading program, including having teachers themselves develop a number of necessary materials. Similarly, Bell's principal hired a full-time assistant principal for curriculum and retained specialists to hold workshops on implementing IGE, an innovation that requires a thorough restructuring of grade levels and instructional roles. With the additional aid of the problem-solving process, this small, very poor elementary school was able to renovate its entire program. Here the focus was on process and structural change from the very outset, owing to the vision and autonomy of the principal.

At the same time it should be underscored that a strongly felt need to select a concrete product at an early stage in a change project, without concern for process, might be useful to catalyze the interest of staff members. In might provide, so to speak, the necessary pump priming. A product review can also suggest various local needs that had been overlooked and that might be served by selecting a certain practice. Hopefully, once the staff's interest has been piqued and their commitment to a change project engaged, they can be steered in the direction of greater concern with process, including training, role changes, and engagement in long-term problem solving. But such a shift of focus, which occurred in several of our case studies, cannot simply be left to chance, for it usually occurred at the insistence of the field agent or other problem-solving specialist. Curiously enough, administrators themselves often failed to appreciate the need for such a shift.

In sum, the common tendency to assume that new products are alone sufficient should be recognized as a case of limited understanding of what is entailed in educational change and dealt with accordingly. But if the staff insists on selecting a product prematurely, it still might be possible to salvage the situation by exploiting their interest in products to induce a discussion of basic needs and required changes in process.

Reliance on Outside Expertise vs. Self-reliance

The RDU program stipulated that local participants must avail themselves of validated resources supplied by an external source, and that in doing so they would be assisted by personnel from outside the district. While reliance on an outside source improves the chance that a product or process will be of high quality, it decreases the sense of ownership and autonomy that are also basic needs of participants in a change project, needs that are most easily satisfied by developing one's own practices and closing ranks against outsiders, as happened in Greenfield, for example. Some of the teachers in Greenfield Junior High were skeptical of a proposed new program because "they had been burned before by changes imported from the outside." Also, when external agents simply fail to deliver, as occurred in several cases owing to lack of an adequate resource pool or discontinuity in external personnel, dependence on external resources can spell disaster.

This dilemma was not explicitly recognized and dealt with by project staffs; consequently, there was a tendency to gravitate to one or the other horns, or else to continually experience an antagonism between them. The teachers at Cramer Junior High continued to be skeptical of externally developed products, believing that their own programs were superior. The teachers at Jefferson Elementary, in contrast, became convinced of the superiority of an externally developed program over their own practices. In most cases, however, there was ambivalence.

In several instances the field agent or local specialist was able to mediate between the two opposing tendencies, helping staff members to develop a sense of ownership as a result of matching external products to self-defined problems, and permitting local modifications, as occurred notably in Greenfield and Galaxy. In the case of Galaxy High School, an external program was adopted that required development of one's own materials for the teaching of reading comprehension. This approach was highly pleasing to the faculty, who managed to implement the new program in spite of a teacher strike, the dismissal of several teachers, and the dissolution of the local task force. Admittedly, a great deal of training was provided by workshops conducted by consultants, but it is doubtfult that these workshops would have been so well received if the teachers had not had the opportunity to create their own materials. It is also worth noting that it was the field agent who made this opportunity available to them.

Field agents are by no means unique to the RDU program on which our case studies are based, although their functions here were perhaps more clearly defined than usual. Broadly conceived, field agents include all types of go-betweens who are affiliated with external agencies: academic consultants, state specialists, product advocates, organization development experts, and more. They may serve part-time or full-time in the role, may specialize in one or a few sites or spread their services among many schools, and they may tend to focus their role in various ways. Some of the most common types are the conveyor of resources, the facilitator of process, the substantive expert, the trouble-shooter, the coordinator or leader of group activities, and of course, a combination of any of these. On another level of analysis, field agents may be regarded as either *reactive* (responding to requests or needs, keeping a low profile) or *proactive* (offering opinions, assessing progress, prompting action).* Local change managers should be aware of these role options so that they can draw upon particular field agents or upon roles in a particular agent's repertoire, as needed. In particular, an agent's ability to mediate between the staff's reliance on external resources and their need for a sense of ownership (self-reliance) should be borne in mind. Since the agents in our case study schools played a variety of roles, their work is referred to at several points in our discussion of dilemmas.

This is not to imply that a local specialist cannot perform some of the functions of a field agent. In particular, roles that are strictly internal to the school can be performed as well, if not better, by local experts. Sasquatch is exemplary in this respect. There the district's director of reading and language arts "was acting in effect as a local change agent, making Herb Milton superfluous." Her considerable experience with group process was the main reason for her success. Consequently, the field agent emphasized his conveyor role: "If the group had no need for his skills as facilitator, they did look to him as a resource person." This experience suggests that, when a qualified person who commands the respect of the faculty is available locally, he can be charged with responsibility for many of the functions of an external facilitator; but the external facilitator can still play an important role in bridging the gap between the school and an external resource base. In sum, both alternatives can be combined in a way that enhances the change effort.

Fidelity vs. Adaptation

A decision to rely on outside sources presents a further dilemma: whether to implement a practice exactly as designed or to adapt it to local conditions. On the one hand, the fidelity approach would seem to improve the chances of reaping the promised benefits of a new practice that had been thoroughly tested. Also, it gives the staff a chance to pilot test the practice locally before making changes, as was deliberately done by the principal in the first year of Penton's project. On the other hand, a decision to make major adaptations might well compensate for the reduced sense of ownership that is caused by external dependency. Also, it is obvious that special conditions might dictate the need for local modifications, although consultants are not always aware of such needs. In the case of Jefferson Elementary, for example, it was not until the second year of a new reading program that the trainers allowed major revisions to meet local needs; and at Sunrise, the consultants on a new management system for reading instruction were given low marks because they were unable to help the school adapt the system to local reading programs.

Nevertheless, an adaptive approach can be carried to extremes, as occurred in Charles Elementary. "Since no pressure was placed on the teachers to use the materials in any particular manner," states the case study, "they tended to pick and choose from among the products, using them as anthologies of ideas or as brainstorming devices." A similar tendency was apparent in Sugarville Elementary and Ogden Junior High School. In all three of these cases, the consequence was an erosion of project goals nearly to the point of extinction.

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*For a fuller discussion of the field agent role in the RDU program, see Louis, Kell and Young (1981).

The lesson seems to be that new practices should at least be tried out as designed, and that subsequent adaptation must not be allowed to proceed unchecked and without thought. Bayfield presents a good contrast to the cases mentioned above. There the teacher made specific modifications in an externally developed career education course, modifications that were dictated by specific local constraints. For example, because of erratic attendance in the new course, continuity of instruction was hard to maintain. "Consequently," notes the case study, "after the seventh week of class, (the teacher) shifted to an organization based on discrete modules that students could work on independently at their own pace." Greenfield went even further with controlled adaptation, culminating in a new teacher-designed program based on Right-to-Read techniques that was presented to the entire faculty and eventually implemented.

In sum, when, why, and how much to adapt external products are three of the most important questions facing managers of change.

Validated vs. Non-validated Products

Another dilemma that arises from the decision to rely on external resources is whether or not to accept only those practices that have been validated by R&D specialists. Several of the local projects rejected the resources conveyed to them by the field agent and instead opted for non-validated practices. This reaction probably reflects the need for social validation rather than scientific validation, for the alternative practices were invariably brought to their attention by a familiar, local person, e.g., a visiting professor, a respected ISD director, a workshop leader, or a staff member. In marked contrast to this personal touch were the recommendations from project headquarters, which were professionally aloof and devoid of blandishment. This tendency to adopt non-validated practices may also reflect a desire to gain greater control over the adoption process, a desire that we have called a need for ownership.

This does not mean that the decision to look elsewhere for products is "wrong," of course. If a school is able to make intelligent adaptations and to monitor a non-validated product over time, then the chances are probably good that its decision was a wise one. Also, if the staff is likely to lose interest in a change project altogether unless their chosen, non-validated product is accepted, as clearly occurred in Sugarville Elementary, then it might be wise to accede to their demands. The disappointment that was caused by Sugarville's being forbidden to implement their chosen product can be gauged from the chain of events that preceded this decision by headquarters:

> It had been practically impossible to meet with the full faculty to get their reactions and solicit their support; the first problem statement had not been approved by the superintendent; and the trainer with whom they had worked so well had left the TEC. Despite the lack of active support from the school and county administration, the facilitator team had persevered, drafted a second problem statement, and identified a preferred solution. Now they discovered it was forbidden.

Clearly, the rejection by headquarters at this juncture in the project did not augur well for Sugarville's change effort, which eventually petered out.

The real point is that there are important implications of choosing validated or non-validated products under different circumstances. Change managers must therefore keep this choice dimension in mind.

Integration vs. Autonomous Implementation

Another dilemma related to strategies and tactics is whether to integrate a new practice with existing practices or to create a relatively autonomous component. Both approaches have advantages. An autonomous component is less likely to interfere with ongoing practices, to threaten the status of staff members who control existing practices, and to require widespread inservice training. It also makes it easier to preserve the fidelity of a new practice and to speed up implementation. Thus, the principal of the Bayfield School was able to inaugurate an employability skills course for seniors in a short period of time with little difficulty, since only a single, recently hired teacher was involved. In contrast, his efforts to make all teachers become responsible for career exploration were thwarted by training problems and the teachers' sense of uncertainty about the new practices.

And yet, integrated practices are more likely to endure, to have broad impact on traditional curriculum and instruction, to protect less able students from the stigma of being shunted into special classes, and in some cases to provide superior education. In fact, these advantages of integration are often cited to justify the "infusion" approach to career education and to improvement of reading skills at post-elementary levels by using supplementary resources in all classrooms. That this type of integration can be achieved is demonstrated by the widespread use of Right-to-Read techniques in the classrooms of Ogden Junior High. Much training and district support were necessary to achieve this level of use, however. It is also noteworthy that even in Ogden, the results of autonomous implementation--a reading lab, a tutoring program, and a workshop--were more readily diffused to other schools in the district. Thus, once again we see that a particular choice dimension must not be taken lightly, but should receive the careful attention that one devotes to any other dilemma of professional practice.

A special problem arises when another, prior change effort is a potential target for integration. While it might seem advisable to try to integrate all new practices that bear on the same problem, it is possible that the prior change effort is faulty in some way and that integration might therefore jeopardize the new effort. Or, the prior effort might have been so carefully designed and executed that any intrusion of a new practice would jeopardize it. This dilemma is not easily resolved. In Cramer, the faculty failed to appreciate the potential for integrating a new reading practice with other reading innovations in the school, and therefore rejected all the alternatives that were presented to them as redundant. Eventually they did select a program to improve the school's reading center, but a short time later the school was closed. Unfortunately, none of our other schools attempted to meld a new practice with another, independent change effort; therefore, one can only speculate about the problems of doing so. It seems safe to assume, however, that the task is not an easy one.

Limited vs. Diffuse and Comprehensive Goals

It might appear to be obvious that the clearer and more realistic one's goals, the better the chance of success. Such goals promote communication, prevent distraction from the task, and provide benchmarks for assessing progress. Indeed, personnel in two of the case study schools that held comprehensive, vague goals experienced a good deal of trouble in staying on target and being successful. Thus, the top priority of Galaxy High School was "to increase teachers' skills so that they could teach kids to read present materials in science, social studies, mathematics, and language arts." Efforts of the field agent to gain greater specification made little headway, and the project seemed doomed until a new principal was hired and a series of consultants was finally engaged. Similarly, authorities in the Treeline district decided that "the broad aim of the project would be the infusion of career education content and principles into the elementary curriculum districtwide." If structured training had been provided, as it was at Galaxy, this vague and overly ambitious goal might have been cut down to manageable size; but virtually no training took place, and the diffuse interests of the decision makers contributed to piecemeal, weak implementation.

And yet, diffuse and highly ambitious goals do have distinct advantages; for one, they are able to enlist a broad spectrum of interests under their banner, as occurred in Parker Valley, which focused on "teacher stress" in its first year's inservice program. Such goals might also raise aspiration levels and impress the public with the staff's ambitiousness and broadness of vision, as occurred in Penton, which sought to integrate the social studies, science, and health curricula by "using career education as the glue." (Fortunately, the principal exerted constant guidance.) On an even more political note, broad goals can enable implementers to maneuver more freely and to mitigate failure by pleading that their intentions were misunderstood. In sum, it seems that sharp, delimited goals, on the one hand, and diffuse, comprehensive goals on the other serve equally important functions.

The possibly harmful consequences of having a multiplicity of goals is suggested by events at Cramer Junior High. The purpose of the change project at Cramer was to adopt a reading program that (1) all teachers could implement themselves, (2) was compatible with a variety of existing programs, (3) was appropriate for junior high students reading two or more years below grade level, (4) was highly interesting, (5) contained low-vocabulary material, and (6) must "develop and strengthen a positive attitude toward learning while providing motivational strategies that teachers could use." Clearly, this was a demanding list of desiderata, and the fact that no such program could be found suggests that it was overly ambitious. If the participants had sought help in coordinating and strengthening Cramer's existing reading programs, or had they concentrated on attacking the problem of discipline and motivation, they might have become more committed and been more successful. A multiplicity of specific goals can be as enervating as a single high level goal that is never spelled out.

The dilemma of choosing between narrow and broad goals is related to the issue of diagnosing readiness, which is also frequently overlooked, as we elaborate later on. A school staff that is preoccupied with the day-to-day routines of "keeping school" might require the stimulus of highly idealistic, comprehensive goals to stir them into action. This seems to have been the strategy of the Bell Elementary principal, for example, who launched IGE in a small, traditional school with low-achieving students and high teacher turnover. In contrast, a staff that is already motivated might require a scaling down of ambitions to manageable size. One of the most regrettable outcomes of a change effort is the cynicism or let-down that ensues from failing to achieve exalted purposes, as seems to have occurred at Greenfield.

In any event, diagnosis of readiness clearly involves the question of readiness for how much change? Despite the advantages of adopting limited goals, one should not overlook the possible need for enlisting a broad spectrum of interests and arousing idealism, at least in the initial stages, by espousing amibitious goals of an abstract nature. Sooner or later, however, such goals will have to be delimited, translated into behavioral terms, and evaluated so that the participants will be able to share a sense of direction and incremental accomplishment.

Formalization vs. Naturalism

A major objective of the RDU program was to try out a rational problem-solving approach to planned change. This approach entails needs assessment, problem definition, a systematic search for solutions, adoption of a solution according to specified criteria, implementation, and evaluative feedback. In the case of the RDU program, the process was supposed to be governed and monitored by a local team that holds meetings to plan and discuss the various phases of the project. The extent to which local efforts were made to comply with this model may be viewed in terms of the degree of formalization of the problem-solving process.

While certain schools sought to translate the model into formal procedures, others strongly resisted this approach; and some shifted from one end of the spectrum to the other over time. In general, it appears that schools that followed the model more closely tended to enjoy more success. The informality of the process in Sugarville, which failed to implement any meaningful change, demonstrates clearly the value of a more formal approach, but there were also some striking exceptions to this conclusion.

Because the problem-solving strategy is unfamiliar to educators, and because there is a tendency to assume that the problem is obvious and that all that is needed is a new product, there was impatience with the strategy. Field agents and specialists--usually from intermediate education units, but occasionally from within the district--therefore played a key role in formalizing the approach. The field agent in Jefferson, for example, persistently encouraged the faculty to identify the problem that underlay students' reading difficulties. She then helped them to specify criteria for selecting a solution, obtained a list of 30 products, and urged the teachers to select one from the list. Throughout this process she revealed outstanding diplomacy, e.g., celebrating the problem definition by passing around a bottle of wine. This does not mean that it is necessary, or even desirable, for the field agent to assume formal *control* of the proceedings, as pointed out earlier. The field agent at several schools, including Jefferson, took a low-keyed approach that was highly effective. Said the Bell principal of her own field agent, "She brainstormed with us and helped us to reexamine our needs. She didn't guide us, but she asked some good questions." And on another occasion: "The support person really gives you more incentive to try, and she broadens your perspective."

The field agent in Greenfield, who was also highly successful, saw her role as "swinging between an active participant and a passive observer." In Sasquatch, the field agent restricted his role to collecting resources because a local specialist assumed responsibility for the problem-solving process.

For the most part, those sites that undertook a systematic needs assessment had little difficulty in doing so. The phase of interpreting the data was more problematic, and the ensuing phases of drawing up criteria for selecting a solution and actually choosing a solution from the resource pool were progressively more difficult. Interestingly enough, evaluative feedback was almost never undertaken, except in an informal fashion. This sequence of increasing difficulty suggests that pressures for *de*-formalizing the problem-solving process mount over time.

One possible reason for this trend is a shift of interest from the process of decision making to the prospective product. As we have already seen, there was a "rush to product selection" in the early stages of several projects. A related reason is that the participants became impatient with formal planning and wanted to begin acting. This pressure became especially intense after a group at last reached consensus on the problem following long discussion and debate. Insistence on further deliberation can sometimes be harmful at this stage. Thus, after refusing for some time to comply with the field agent's request that they develop selection criteria, the Galaxy teachers finally convinced her to "give up her desires to establish selection criteria and find a suitable program in the knowledge base." She acceded to their demand, a consultant was engaged who mentioned a program in another state, and the program was eventually adopted to everyone's satisfaction. Had the field agent balked, it is possible that the project would have ground to a halt. In short, insistence on formal criteria of selection can be inadvisable at times.

Similarly, in an informal rural setting with little public understanding of educational options, it might be inappropriate to insist on a formal needs assessment. In Bayfield, both the superintendent and principal felt that "formal surveys were not needed in a district the size of Bayfield, where the population had face-to-face contact both socially and professionally with local educators." They therefore felt justified in ignoring the results of a formal needs assessment among residents that had indicated that art education was viewed as the top priority need. The two administrators doubted "whether many of the respondents to the survey really understood what the survey was asking." Consequently, they emphasized career education instead of art education--a not unwise decision, it would seem, in a district that was obliged to prepare its graduates for jobs elsewhere because of high local unemployment.

Another reason for not adhering to the letter of problem-solving guidelines is that the paucity of group process skills in certain settings might generate frustration and debilitating conflict within the local action team. The problem-solving process requires not just an understanding of, and patient commitment to, its goals but also certain skills in group management. Sometimes these skills can be found on the school or district staff (e.g., the school psychologist in Parker Valley and the district reading consultant in Sasquatch), but our case studies suggest that this is a rare happenstance. This brings us back to the importance of having a problem-solving specialist, such as a field agent, to guide the participants through the various phases while nurturing their group skills for similar endeavors in the future. Intensive training sessions for both field agents and local facilitators, as were held for Sugarville and Bell elementary schools, can also be valuable; but it must never be overlooked that the problem-solving process, just like an external resource, is an innovation that might require local adaptation. In some settings a highly formalized approach can be ill advised.

A final step in the problem-solving process that was almost universally ignored was formal evaluation of the new practice. Had the Greenfield staff undertaken such an evaluation, they might have avoided the sense of anomie that followed implementation. As the case study asserts, "... Greenfield teachers and administrators did not know whether they had accomplished anything. To know, they would need tangible evidence or external confirmation; but they had neither...(Institutionalization) created ambiguity about whether anything at all had changed." It is interesting to contrast this case with Jefferson and Bell, both of which also failed to conduct a formal evaluation. In these schools the teachers had an intuitive sense of accomplishment based on informal assessments, including the comments of parents. Formal evaluation might be superfluous in such schools, even if it showed that the new practice was not effective educationally. The principal of Penton, as a case in point, was the only staff member in any of the case study schools who devoted a great deal of attention to evaluation; but when the criterion-referenced tests failed to show any significant student gains, the principal nevertheless interpreted the results "as indicating increased student achievement in the basic skills." In short, the staff was convinced that it had accomplished a great deal, and that conviction sustained them despite the ambiguous test outcomes. The staff could have dispensed with the tests altogether, except perhaps for their publicity value, and relied on their informal assessments. An astute manager of change, however, will probably wish to promote both formal and informal types of evaluation, leading the staff in a discussion of the possible reasons for any discrepancies between the two approaches. Here, then, is a dilemma that is perhaps best resolved by opting for a combination of both alternatives.

READINESS AND CONTINGENCIES

Initial System Readiness: Go vs. No Go

A prominent concern of the social system perspective, as noted earlier, is the system's readiness for change. One should not assume that all resistance to change is irrational or conservative. Sometimes a school or district is simply not prepared to undertake change, in which case an imposition of change not only might fail to achieve its objective, but also might have harmful consequences. However, one must not jump to this conclusion, since a state of limited readiness may simply conceal deeper reserves of motivation. Moreover, an apparent lack of motivation may be remedied by strong leadership. Here, then, is another major dilemma that deserves the utmost attention of change managers.

Certain of our success stories occurred in schools that one would have initially judged to be unready. Thus, the teachers at Ogden had been "too discouraged by the school's poor teaching conditions, and by what they perceived as the uncaring attitude of the district, to make any great changes on their own initiative." And yet, this faculty managed to salvage a very poor startup to achieve success. What turned the tide was a strike that created cohesion among the teachers, and the resignation of an unpopular reading coordinator and a principal. These events might appear to have been fortuitous, but they would not have led to success unless the faculty had a strong, latent commitment to improving the reading skills of their low-achieving pupils. Interestingly enough, almost all of the other principals in the district who had earlier been approached about the project "expressed unwillingness to impose a time-consuming activity on their teachers." Was this a wise decision on their part or only a safe one?

The Penton faculty also seemed to be a poor bet for infusion of career education because "few teachers were interested...some felt it would

195

be an added burden, others that it would require a different teaching style." Nevertheless, the principal assumed leadership and helped the staff to revamp its entire curriculum with career education as the integrative theme.

Conversely, some schools that would seem to have provided fertile ground for change balked at the new project. River City was known to have a highly innovative school system, including a variety of alternative education programs; but when the field agent tried to elicit the cooperation of six elementary principals, all six turned her down. The reason for this widespread resistance was that "people felt they were already involved in too many things..." In fact, this seems to have been the case. Nevertheless, the principal from Cramer Junior High responded enthusiastically, and the project was finally launched. Even then, the junior high teachers, who appeared to share the feelings of their elementary colleagues, gave scant attention to the project, which eventually dwindled away. "Actually," said one participant, "the more we looked into the programs, the more we realized we didn't need a new program." The field agent had asked the principal about the teachers' feeling that they already had enough innovative reading programs, but the principal was unperturbed. "Students need as much help as they can get," he asserted, "and that may mean seven or eight new programs." What he overlooked was the inability of his staff to absorb any more innovations, at least without his active assistance.

The clearest cases of readiness were Parker Valley and Penton. The Parker Valley staff was highly qualified, well paid, and enjoyed an unusual degree of community support. Moreover, because the inservice program of the teachers' association had run out of funds, the RDU project was embraced as an opportunity to continue the series with federal money. In Penton many steps had already been taken toward implementation of career education, including a needs assessment and product selection. All that was needed was funding.

Such high states of readiness are uncommon, however, and indeed may simply indicate a case of "opportunistic" motivation. Parker Valley, for example, did not follow the prescribed problem-solving model, but simply continued its practice of bringing in consultants for inservice training. In short, change managers must give careful attention to determining whether a setting is genuinely ready for planned change. This is not an easy decision to make, as shown by the poor judgment exercised by several of the principals cited earlier.

Contingency Management: Continue vs. Terminate

A related problem is deciding when to terminate a change project that appears to be hopelessly blocked. This is an issue that is almost never broached in the planned change literature, yet it is clear that a great deal of money and effort could be saved if administrators knew when to call a halt. Thus, the Cramer Junior High project might have been terminated at a number of points. When members of the local action team consistently failed to attend meetings, when several new programs were rejected, when time for meetings was rescheduled out of existence by the district, and when the feeling mounted that a new program simply was not needed--all of these turning points should have raised the question of aborting the project. But they did not, at least in the minds of the administrators, so the project stumbled along until court-ordered desegregation dealt it a final blow.

And yet, the Galaxy High School project, which turned out to be a success, also seemed to be in serious trouble at a number of junctures. The refusal of the local action team to spend time developing a problem statement, the vagueness of its goals, the principal's actions independently of the project, the rejection of all the alternatives from the resource pool, the lack of meetings--all were signs that the project was in jeopardy. But when a new principal was hired, and the local action team decided to provide awareness-raising workshops for teachers, and especially when the field agent brought in a colleague from another district with a successful reading program, the project was reinvigorated.

The difference between Galaxy and Cramer seems to have been a basic commitment to the adoption and implementation of a new reading program. It will be recalled that the Cramer faculty was highly skeptical from the beginning; hence, their fits and starts reflected a lack of genuine interest. The Galaxy faculty, in contrast, was basically committed in spite of its recurrent setbacks and confusions. As the case study relates, the main reason that the field agent wanted Galaxy as a project site was "the interest and commitment the site school has expressed in the area of reading."

These experiences strongly suggest that a later decision to continue or terminate a change project must be made with reference to at least two primary factors: the initial motivation of the participants, and the remediability of the conditions that seem to be hampering progress.

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APPENDIX

RDU Project Descriptions

The Northwest Reading Consortium (NRC), under the overall direction of the Washington State Education Agency, operated as a consortium of four states in the Northwest: Washington, Oregon, Alaska and Idaho. The project built upon the existing Right to Read programs in the four states. (The Right to Read program is a nationwide program sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education to eliminate functional illiteracy.) The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory was also an affiliate, providing training to project staff and support in the development of a pool of R&D products.

The Georgia State Department of Education operated a project which provided funds and services to all participating school districts located in three Cooperative Educational Service Areas. The emphasis of the RDU project in Georgia was on building local school district capacities in the early stages of planning and program selection. The implementation phase of the problem-solving model was subsequently carried out with federal funds available through the state department of education under Title IV-C of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and with other state funds.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education developed and coordinated a school improvement process which involved the participation and resources of several organizations: Research for Better Schools (a regional education lab); Research and Information Services for Education (a state-wide information and dissemination service); the Learning Research and Development Center at the University of Pittsburgh; and the state's Intermediate Units. The project's agencies involved numerous defined steps, including a series of formal training sessions in problem solving at the school sites.

The National Education Association (NEA) operated its project in collaboration with the state education agencies and corresponding state education associations in 12 states: Alabama, Calfornia, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. In contrast to the other RDU projects, this project focused exclusively on the improvement of teacher inservice education. Services were provided by two linking agents in each state who trained local staff.

The Florida Department of Education served as prime contractor in a linkage system which also involved the state universities (especially Florida State and the University of Florida), and eight of the state's Teacher Education Centers (TECs). An important feature of this project is that training in group problem-solving techniques was provided not only to the field agent (one of whom was located in each TEC), but also to selected local school staff. The school site facilitators, with the help of the field agents, were responsible for leading the staff at their sites through the entire problem-solving process.

The Career Education Dissemination Project of the Michigan Department of Education was designed to help local sites meet the requirements of state career education legislation passed in 1974. One of the project's major objectives was to develop a permanent dissemination and diffusion system in career education. Because of this emphasis on permanence, the project attempted to work with existing structures and personnel in the state's intermediate school districts rather than build new ones. The primary strategy was to provide direct training and programmatic funds to coordinators who were staff members at local sites.

The NETWORK, a non-profit research and service organization in Andover, coordinated a consortium of agencies in six states: in Minnesota, the agency involved was a teacher center associated with a university; in Washington, a local school district; in California, a regional education laboratory sponsored by NIE; in Kansas, an independent statewide education diffusion organization; in Connecticut, a cooperative service agency supported by local school districts; and in Massachusetts, a division of the NETWORK itself. This project was formed mainly to improve the utilization of R&D products in reading in selected local schools. The field agents provided assistance to the local sites, while a considserable amount of technical assistance and support was provided to the field agents by the project office in Andover.